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ABSTRACT

This document studies the role of unions and management in vocational training in France. Through an analysis of existing and historical structures governing cooperation and coordination between the social partners and the public bodies responsible for vocational education and training, an in-depth investigation was carried out and proposals for improved dialogue at various levels were made. This report contains three sections: a general analysis, a sectoral analysis, and synthesis and recommendations. Part I examines the role of unions and management in the general system of vocational training in France, including their roles in the establishment of norms and the implementation of vocational training. Part II looks at the implementation of vocational training in the metal and construction industries and in banking. Part III addresses the functioning of the bodies and their dynamic issues and perspectives, including the limited performance and difficulties of the French system. Some recommendations are made for the future. The document concludes with 31 references, a list of abbreviations, and appendices summarizing developments, illustrating organizational relationships, classifying and outlining training expenditures by size of firm. (KC)

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The role of unions and management in vocational training in France

European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

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The role of unions and management in vocational training in France

Alain d'Iribarne
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Foreword

This study is one of a series of 12 monographs on the situation in the EC Member States. Through an analysis of existing and historical structures governing cooperation and coordination between the social partners and the public bodies responsible for vocational education and training (excluding general secondary education and university education), it was intended:

a) to carry out an in-depth investigation of the situation commencing with the central regulatory instruments and decision-making levels. These investigations were to examine the situation at regional, local and enterprise levels as well as in industrial sectors in EC Member States, and

b) to develop proposals for the contents and objectives of an improved social dialogue at the various levels.

The reports comprise two sections: a general analysis and a sectoral analysis.

Although the general analysis was, as far as possible, to be reinforced by the sectoral analysis, the two were to be complementary, whereas the conclusions were to be directed more towards objective (b).

The general analysis of the historical development, institutional involvement and problem areas was also to include a

description of the current situation with regard to the links between the world of work (employees, employers, industrial sectors and enterprises) and the world of vocational training (in-company, inter company/group training, school-based training - both initial and continuing - private, public and independent vocational training sponsors).

Furthermore, attention was to focus on the degree and nature of the involvement of the social partners in the development, implementation, administration and control of training policy programmes, including the extent and nature of state intervention within the framework of this involvement. The following aspects were to be included:

- analysis of legal regulations and collective framework agreements (education, labour market and social legislation, nature and extent of the autonomous powers of the social partners in the field of vocational training as specified in general collective agreements, sectoral agreements and typical enterprise-related agreements), and

- investigation of the problems relating to existing cooperative approaches to vocational training, particularly with a view to the equal distribution of training provision amongst various target groups (women, young people, adults, early school leavers, foreigners, etc.) and amongst the various regions and sectors, and finally

- description of the different methods of state intervention aimed at promoting the social dialogue on the basis of selected situations and regions or sectors.

In order to illustrate and give a realistic description of the existing situation, the nature and extent of cooperation amongst the social partners and government bodies were to be analysed in three sectors:

- in a sector dominated by small and medium enterprises or craft industries, e.g. the construction sector;

- in a sector characterized by modern industrial technology, e.g. the metal or electronics industries, and

- in a sector in which services and the employment of female labour are predominant, e.g. banks and insurance companies.

In these sectors the intention was to analyse and compare work-place, employment and occupational structures (hierarchy) in specific areas in which appropriate data were available. The aim was to identify any differences in the social relationships between employees and employers, and to evaluate the involvement and participation of employees and their organizations in initial and continuing vocational training activities, including any eventual implications for career advancement.

The sectoral analysis was intended to illustrate the more general analyses and assessments, and to substantiate and supplement the findings with concrete descriptions. In this connection, the intention was not to carry out case studies but rather to evaluate existing studies and collective agreements between the social partners in respect of initial and continuing vocational training.

The research work was usually accompanied at national level by individual ad hoc meetings between the institute(s) under contract and the three Management Board members from the respective country, and at EC level by regular discussions organized by CEDEFOP and the contractual partners from other Member States.

The investigation covered a period of seven months. In the second half of 1986, the studies were carried out in Belgium, Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom and they were concluded in early 1987. The studies in the other Member States were conducted in the course of 1987. A synthesis report to be prepared on the basis of the twelve country reports, will attempt to collate systematically the most important conclusions, common trends and results in order to promote the dialogue between those concerned both in the Member States and at EC level.

The individuals, independent scientists and scientific institutes under contract were, of course, free to adapt the set outline for all twelve investigations to the prevailing

conditions and existing institutional framework in their respective countries.

On behalf of the authors, too, I should like to extend my sincere thanks to the members of the CEDEFOP Management Board from the respective Member States and to the numerous experts and individuals from the enterprises, training and other bodies, and to employers' and trade union organizations for their support in this work. We hope that this investigation will help to promote better and constructive understanding, despite the existence of very different interests, and thus lead to satisfactory solutions to the prevailing problems facing the development of initial and continuing vocational training. Thanks are also extended to the team of authors for the fruitful and successful cooperation on what was certainly not an easy subject for investigation.

B. Sellin
Project Coordinator

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The role played by the two sides of industry, both management and trade unions, in continuing vocational training has proved particularly difficult to define. There are several reasons for this.

The first is due to some extent to structural characteristics. The general system of vocational training in France is particularly complex, with numerous bodies responsible for guidance, new initiatives and regulation. The composition, role and exact functions of these bodies, beyond the formal frameworks laid down by law or collective agreements, is not always easy to determine. Consequently, numerous detailed investigations are required in order to discover the reality that lies behind the formal structures.

The second arises out of the direction taken by research in the area. There are in fact many publications which, in various forms, describe the general arrangements for continuing vocational training in France financed by firms. In addition, there are regular publications by legal writers which are aimed primarily at trade unions and management and which provide information and commentaries on legislation and collective agreements as well as on their areas of application. Still within the same framework, there are also studies of the financing, or to be more precise, of the total expenditure incurred by firms in respect of training. Such studies are an attempt to determine more precisely the level of expenditure on vocational training in different sectors and types of firms, the characteristics of the beneficiaries of this expenditure, the kinds of training programmes implemented and the nature of the organisations providing the training. In particular, there exist studies and research projects on the way in which the mechanisms set up by government bodies in order to encourage vocational training for school leavers actually ease their entry into the job market and the consequent effect of these measures on the unemployment figures for young people. To the best of our knowledge, however, there are no published studies of the role of unions and management in vocational training.

The final reason appears to be linked more to current economic circumstances. While we have encountered great interest in the subject, particularly from trade unions, it has not always been easy for us to obtain meetings within the planned deadlines. These difficulties should not be seen as casting doubt on the notion of negotiation between the two sides of industry in the area of vocational training. On the contrary, we have recorded several statements in favour of joint management in this area, although these statements are not based on any precise consideration of its actual usefulness, but rather, in our view, on an act of faith. It would appear, therefore, that the difficulties that we have encountered are linked rather to the resurgence of social tension in France at the end of 1986, which

has led the leaders of both sides of industry to greater mobilisation of their resources.

Within the scope of the investigations that it has been possible to carry out, unions and management play a relatively important role in the general framework of continuing vocational training because of the exceptional importance of contractual policy in this area. The same is not true of public sector vocational training as a whole, whether it is initial training under the auspices of the Ministry of Education or continuing training. In order to analyse their role in the overall functioning of the vocational training system, the two sides of industry were considered as "actors" who, alongside other actors such as departments and agencies of central or local government, politicians and training organisations, operate within organisations and procedures which fulfil a certain number of basic functions:

- analysis of "training needs" in the longer or shorter term;
- definition of training objectives and policies in the light of these needs;
- financing;
- definition of programmes, of educational content and testing of knowledge;
- provision of training;
- "certification" of the results of continuing training programmes;
- provision of an information, consultation and guidance service for those seeking training;
- exercising financial, educational or social control over the conditions and implementation of training activities.

The bodies in question may have national or local, intersectoral, sectoral or firm-level responsibilities; they may be involved in initial or continuing training or in the apprenticeship system. It is necessary in France to make such distinctions, because of the way in which the foundations of the current vocational training system have been historically structured.

It would have been difficult, particularly from the point of view of an international comparison, to avoid an initial examination of the role devolving upon both sides of industry in

the provision of vocational training, the starting point for which must be the functions allocated to the various bodies set up within the general framework of the law and the contractual agreements between unions and management and their composition, whether unions and management are equally represented in these bodies or not. In this way, it will be easier to locate the basic roles of the respective parties within a general system whose structure and functioning are not unimportant. (Part I).

However, because of its over-general nature, this approach would not in itself be sufficient. The general framework does not in fact reveal practices which differ according to region and, more especially, according to sector, and which thus reflect particular traditions in industrial relations specific to each one. These sectoral differences in practices are also the consequence of differences in their economic and social structures, which are reflected in heterogenous methods of labour force management. From this point of view, the differences between the three sectors on which our analysis is concentrated- the metal industry, construction and banking - are particularly marked, which makes it possible to clarify these differences in logic and functioning (Part II).

Finally , the influence exerted by both sides of industry on vocational training cannot be properly defined without close examination of the actual functioning, both internal and relative to each other, of the organisations that help to implement the system. It will then be possible, in view of the greater insight into their role in the planning and functioning of the system, to reach a better understanding of their contribution to the effectiveness of the system in terms of its two main objectives, which are undoubtedly the management of the labour market and the medium and long-term development of human resources. This will in turn open the way for consideration of possible reforms and future developments (Part III).

PART I

THE ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS AND MANAGEMENT IN THE GENERAL SYSTEM OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING

The vocational training system, as it currently exists in France, is complex but perfectly consistent. The system was set up on the initiative of the government of the time in the early 1970s in a period of great economic expansion. The government's aim was to endow the country with as comprehensive a system of vocational training as possible, which would cater both for the initial training of young people and for the retraining of adults. On 16 July 1971, various laws were promulgated simultaneously: one dealt with initial training, another with apprenticeships and a third with continuing vocational training; the law on continuing vocational training has the distinctive feature of being tied in with a national intersectoral agreement on vocational and further training which was signed on 9 July 1970 by the confederations representing both management and unions. With the promulgation of these various laws on vocational training, "it was then possible to declare that France led all the other Western countries in this area" (1).

Although economic and social conditions were subsequently transformed by recession and rising unemployment, the basic principles underlying the vocational training system have not changed since its inception. Thus the system had proved itself flexible enough to take account of the new economic and social conditions.

It is through this system that the participation of unions and management in making decisions on vocational training is organised.

In the first instance, unions and management are active in the establishment of legal rules when they relate more particularly to continuing vocational training. It is true that there is no legislation or agreement within the system of continuing training that grants them such power. It is rather a question of the establishment of norms initiated by the government of the day when setting up the system of continuing training, a process which has subsequently been repeated each time that the system has had to undergo modifications (chapter I).

In other respects, the vocational training apparatus makes explicit provision for the participation of unions and management in the implementation of vocational training, whether it is a question of initial training, continuing training or apprenticeships (chapter II).

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1) B. BOUBLI, L'apprentissage en France. Study carried out for the European Commission, Série Politique Sociale, 1976, 29 p.

CHAPTER I - THE ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS AND MANAGEMENT IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NORMS

As far as the establishment of norms is concerned, the influence of unions and management does not extend to the whole of the vocational training system. Firstly, it is restricted to continuing training; the establishment of rules governing initial training and apprenticeships is the sole responsibility of the public authorities. Moreover, within the continuing training system, this influence is limited to the training paid for by firms.

The following procedure is used to establish norms for the continuing training paid financed by firms: firstly, an intersectoral agreement is reached at national level by trade unions and management; the legislature then acts on the basis of this agreement. It should be pointed out that this method of establishing norms is particularly unusual in France: vocational training is the only area governed by labour law in which a procedure of this kind is institutionalised.

There is no express provision either in law or in agreement for such a process. However, as has been rightly pointed out: "all those who have attempted, fairly dispassionately, to analyse the way in which the norms with respect to continuing training have been established over the past 15 or 20 years in our country have concluded that the mechanisms that control this area and the institutions that make it up have been formed by a process that has repeated itself in a virtually identical manner: trade unions and management propose a system which is then taken up by the public authorities, who extend and sometimes amend it, but always retain the basic system drawn up jointly by the employers' and union organisations: the law of 16 July 1971 is a response to the intersectoral agreement of 1970, the 1978 law corresponds to the 1976 agreement and the law of 26 February 1984 reflects the agreements of September 82 and October 83, and so on....(2)".

The influence that both sides of industry can exert on the establishment of norms with respect to continuing training is strictly dependent on the way in which the intersectoral agreement and the subsequent legislation are linked. This link is based on certain principles, and the way in which it has actually functioned during the important stages in the establishment of the continuing training system reveals the contribution made by the intersectoral agreement drawn up by both sides of industry to the subsequent legislation.

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2) D. SCHALCHLI, Politique contractuelle et formation continue, PADDEIA, 1986, p.15.

1. The link between intersectoral agreements and legislation: the principles

This method of establishing norms, which is based on the linking of legislation to a prior intersectoral agreement signed by unions and management, arose out of the wishes of the government in power during the period when the vocational training system was set up. These wishes were part of a much greater project to establish a "new society", in which contractual policy would be at the heart of industrial relations. According to Jacques DELORS, who at the time championed this new method of establishing norms, it had seemed realistic "to embark on this new phase - after those instituted by the laws of 1966 and 1968 - with an agreement between employers and unions. Not only because a step of this kind was right in line with attempts being made at that time to establish real social dialogue in France, but also because in that way the actors would be more highly motivated. It was the intersectoral agreement of 1970 which instituted a good compromise and dealt with the right of the individual to continuing training" (3).

However, the signing of an intersectoral agreement on vocational and further training is not enough to establish legal rules from which all interested parties might benefit: in France, an intersectoral agreement, even if it has been extended, cannot be applied to all sectors of economic activity (4); for this to be the case, the government has to legislate. And this indeed is what happened: the law of 16 July on continuing and further training incorporated the provisions of the 1970 intersectoral agreement and made them universally applicable.

As can be imagined, a process of this kind gives a leading role to the two sides of industry in the establishment of norms for continuing training. And this role is all the greater because the legislature is bound by the provisions of the intersectoral agreement. This was the argument put forward by the signatories to the agreement of 23 October 1983 on

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3) Le Monde, 31 October 1980.

4) In accordance with the law on collective bargaining in France, a collective agreement is automatically applicable to the firms which are party to the agreement or which are affiliated to the organisations that are signatories to the agreement. The intersectoral agreements on ongoing training were signed by the national employers' federations, the CNPF and the CGPME, which refuse membership to firms from the agricultural sector and cannot therefore hold such firms to the agreement. Similarly, when the government extends an intersectoral agreement, it can only extend it to the sectors represented by the organisations that have signed the agreement.

alternating training. According to them, the government's bill had departed from the intentions expressed in the agreement: "Our intention in signing the agreement was to indicate once again our attachment to the principle that unions and management should themselves define the terms of all important changes and that it is the role of the law to enable the provisions of the agreement to be applied" (5)

However, it cannot be claimed that the legislature can be obliged to respect the wishes of the two sides of industry: the general will cannot be bound by individual wishes. It has been pointed out quite rightly that: "to reduce the law to the status of a decree applying the provisions of an agreement is hardly in keeping with the principles that govern our legal system" (6). Moreover, when the way in which the process has functioned is analysed, it can be seen that the legislature has never considered itself bound by the provisions of an intersectoral agreement; it has sometimes added to the wishes of unions and management and has sometimes "sorted out the terms of the agreement, incorporating some into legislation, while ignoring and gainsaying others" (7). It is precisely this that we are going to be able to verify by analysing the functioning of the process by which the norms devised by the champions of the "plan for a new society" have been established.

2. <u>The link between intersectoral agreements and legislation and its operation during the important stages in the establishment of the continuing training system</u>

Three important stages in the establishment of the rules relating to continuing training financed by firms can be clearly distinguished.

The intersectoral agreement of 9 July 1970 and the law of 16 July 1971 laid down the basic principles of the system, which have never been called into question by the various reforms introduced subsequently.

The scope of these reforms has in fact been limited: it has been a question of making some adjustments and of implementing

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5) Quoted by J.M. LUTTRINGER in "La réforme du droit de la formation professionnelle continue", May 1981 - May 1984. Droit Social 1984, p. 355.

6) Ibid.

7) M.J. MONTALESCOT, "Formation professionnelle: vers une distanciation de l'accord et de la loi", Droit Social, June 1984, p.367.

the changes made necessary by the transformation of the economic and social environment; while some significant advances have been made, they have never called into question the foundations of the system.

There have been two successive sets of reforms. The first was the amendment of 8 July 1976 to the agreement of 9 July 1970, with which the law of 16 July 1978 was linked. The second was the two amendments to the agreement of 9 July 1970, one dated 21 September 1982 and the other 26 October 1983. Both dealt with alternating training and were incorporated into the law of 24 February 1984.

2.1 The intersectoral agreement of 9 July 1970 and the law of 16 July 1971

One of the provisions of the Grenelle agreements that followed the events of May 1968 was that negotiations should be opened "on vocational and further training" [8]. These negotiations were concluded on 9 July 1970, when a national intersectoral agreement was signed. The parties to the agreement were, on the employers' side, the CNPF and, on the employees' side, the five main trade union federations, the CGT, the CFDT, the CGT-FO, the CFTC and the CGC. This agreement lays down the right of the individual to training leave and makes provision for the re-training of employees threated with redundancy or who have been made redundant for economic reasons; it also reaffirms the consultative role of the works' committee in matters of training.

The law of 16 July 1971, in incorporating continuing vocational training into the framework of life-long education, reflects the 1970 agreement: it made universally applicable the system of continuing training established by unions and management and reaffirmed the role of the works' committee. However, the legislation did not simply repeat the provisions of the agreement. It went far beyond what had been intended by either employers or employees by making it compulsory for firms with more than 10 employees to contribute to the financing of the vocational training system by spending 0.8% of their wages bill on continuing training.

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[8] The rue de Grenelle is the street in Paris in which the main ministries and government buildings are located.

2.2. The amendment of 9 July 1976 to the national intersectoral agreement of 9 July 1970 and the law of 16 July 1978

The amendment of 9 July 1976 made changes to the original agreement. These changes were the subject of much controversy: on the employees' side, the CGT and the CFDT refused to sign the amendment. Thus the parties to the amendment were, on the employers' side, the CNPF and, on the employees' side, the CGT-FO, the CFTC and the CGC.

The aim of the new agreement was to improve the payment made to employees taking training leave; moreover, it laid down the works council consultative procedure on training plans: to this end, it specified the procedures by which the works' committee should be consulted and the information that had to be made available to committee members prior to each meeting.

With respect to these two points, the law of 17 July 1978 was based largely on the content of the agreement.

2.3 The amendments of 21 September 1982 and 26 October 1983 to the national intersectoral agreement of 9 July 1970 and the law of 24 February 1984

In signing the amendment of 21 September 1982, employers and employees provided "the means of giving individual employees easier access to training leave". This amendment was agreed unanimously: all the organisations representing both unions and management signed it.

The means by which the amendment of 21 September 1982 gave individual employees easier access to leave of training were of two kinds: on the one hand, adequate financing was to be made available from obligatory contributions made by firms and, on the other, institutions were set up, with equal representation from both sides, whose task was to manage the funds and to take financial responsibility for employees on training leave. In addition, in an area not directly linked with training leave, this same amendment made the National Training Associations (ASFOs, or Associations de Formation), which are training organisation set up by the employers, into jointly-managed organisations. It also lowered the threshold for the establishment of works' council training committees to two hundred employees.

On 26 October 1983, another amendment to the 1970 agreement was signed by the CPNF, the CGPME and all the trade union organisations, with the exception of the CGT. This amendment, which dealt solely with the entry of young people into the labour market, created three new types of alternating training contracts for young people aged between 16 and 25: work experience courses, qualification contracts and job adaptation contracts. The reason

given by the CGT for refusing to sign was that it rejected two of the three formulas put forward.

The law of 24 February 1984, which dealt with reform of the vocational training system, used the provisions of the previously signed agreements for its own ends. As with the 1971 law, it did not simply take on board the changes proposed by the agreement between unions and management. Instead, it went beyond what employers and employees had wanted and made it compulsory to negotiate the objectives and instruments of training at sector level, or, failing that, at firm level; it clarified the rules for controlling the training market as well the methods by which firms were to contribute to the financing of the training system.

CHAPTER II - THE ROLE OF UNIONS AND MANAGEMENT IN IMPLEMENTING VOCATIONAL TRAINING

The vocational training apparatus contains a certain number of rules which formalise the role of both employers and employees in making decisions on the development of vocational training. It will be necessary in the first instance to examine the ways in which both sides participate in the decision-making process, in order to define the powers at their disposal and the conditions under which those powers can be exercised. However, it is not enough simply to understand these powers. It is also necessary to have some knowledge of the issues at stake (II).

1. The participation of employers and employees in the decision-making process

The extent of the influence of employers and employees depends on the nature of the power granted to them. The nature of that power cannot in fact be separated from the instruments made available to them - consultation, the obligation to negotiate without achieving any result, power-sharing in joint bodies - in view of the fact that power may be exercised in various bodies depending on whether it is initial training, continuous training or the apprenticeship system that is being considered.

1.1. The actors and the instruments of power

1.1.1. As far as initial vocational training is concerned, the state authorities are the sole actor in France, since they have responsibility for the planning, financing, dispensing and evaluation of such training. These responsibilities are divided between central government and local authorities. However, central government has retained a leading role: it is responsible for defining the general objectives of education policy, for determining the content of training programmes and for managing staff. Although various other

centres of power exist, unions and management intervene only at central government level.

1.1.2. As far as continuing training is concerned, however, there is a diverse range of actors: "central government, the local authorities, public institutions, public and private educational establishments, associations, professional, trade union and family organisations as well as firms all contribute towards continuing training" [9]. As a result, there are various centres of power: central government and the regional authorities, the trades and professions and inter-trade organisations at national or regional level, the firm and the training market.

* As far as the public authorities are concerned, the responsibilities are, as is the case with initial training, divided between central government and the regional authorities, although it is the regional authorities who have overall responsibility. Central government is only allocated certain functions, in particular responsibility for priority programmes for national economic development.

In order to implement policies drawn up beforehand, central government and the regional authorities traditionally use two legal instruments: assent and agreement. Prior assent to a course given by the public authorities is a condition that must be fulfilled before the authorities will contribute towards the payment of the trainees. The assent technique is also used as a means of controlling organisations set up by the two sides of industry, such as the Fonds d'Assurance Formation (FAF), or Training Insurance Funds, and the Fonds de Gestion du Congé Individuel de Formation (Fongécif), of Funds for the Administration of Personal Training Leave. Both central government and the regional authorities also enter into agreements with various organisations: the agreements entered into with training organisations provide for the financing from public funds of the operating and equipment costs incurred by these organisations.

In implementing their policy, the public authorities also use more recent techniques, "designed to encourage planning and a more global approach to training policies" [10]. In particular, these more recent techniques include planning contracts between central government and the regional authorities with respect to continuing training and training development contracts concluded between the public authorities, on the one hand, and professional

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[9] Article L. 900.1 of the Code of Labour.

[10] J.M. LUTTRINGER, "Le droit de la formation continue", op. cit.

groups or firms on the other, and which provide public funds as a supplement to firms' expenditure on training programmes.

As far as continuing training is concerned, the legislature has given employers and employees the means to make their views heard both at central and regional level.

* At the level of the profession or trade, legislation and agreements ensure that vocational training is implemented jointly by trade union and employers' organisations.

In principle, it is at the national level that the two sides of industry intervene on behalf of the profession or trade; however, they also act at district, departmental and regional level.

Other questions relating to continuing training are dealt with at the inter-professional level which encompasses all trades and professions. Geographically speaking, some of these questions are dealt with at national level, while others are handled at district level. It is at the national inter-professional level that unions and management define norms that are universally applicable. As far as joint management of personal training leave is concerned, this is carried out mainly at the regional inter-professional level.

* The firm represents another level at which decisions on continuing vocational training are taken. Indeed, the role of firms is fundamental, since they are at the heart of the general system of continuing training. It is firms which, in conjunction with the public authorities, finance the training programmes. However, their role is not limited to the financing of training; depending on their own needs, firms draw up and implement their own training policies. In other words, they also act as providers of training. As far as training policy and its implementation is concerned, the employers retain all decision-making powers. However, employees do have a say in decisions, either through the mediation of their elected representatives or through the trade union organisations.

* The existence of a genuine training market seems to be one of the characteristics of the French system of continuing training: the organisations that provide training may be either public or private. Within these organisations, important decisions are taken on the implementation of vocational training. Apart from the fact that they are self-managing, they have a great deal of freedom in the organisation of the training that they provide. In particular, they decide on the way in which training is organised and conducted, draw up programmes and determine the teaching techniques and resources used and the way in which knowledge is tested and the training ratified. In some of these organisations, but not in all, unions and management

have a role in the decision-making process.

1.1.3. As far as the apprenticeship system is concerned, the public authorities play a leading role, although they are by no means the only actor. Apprenticeship is a form of alternating training; the theoretical part is provided in Apprenticeship Centres (Centres de Formation d'Apprentis, or CFAs), which may be attached either to public or to private organisations, while the practical training is carried out in firms.

Central government and the regional and departmental authorities are the power centres in the apprenticeship system. As far as the development and implementation of policies is concerned, the distribution of responsibilities between central government and the regions is based on the same principles as for continuing training: the regions have overall responsibility, while central government has specific functions, particularly responsibility for programmes that are important for national economic development. The departments also have certain responsibilities. As is the case with continuing training, the public authorities use the agreements as a means of implementing their policy: agreements are concluded with the CFAs. The legislature has given unions and management the means of expressing their point of view at the various decision-making levels in the system.

Overall responsibility for the organisation of the apprenticeship system lies with the Ministry of Education, i.e. with central government. It is here that the content of the teaching programmes, the teaching and testing methods used etc. are laid down. Apprenticeships are ratified by diplomas of technological education. Unions and management also have a say in the decision-making process in this area.

1.2. The consultative bodies

Consultation of unions and management leaves full decision-making powers with the decision-making body seeking their point of view.

The general vocational training system places an obligation on providers of training to consult unions and management before making their decision:

- the public authorities must seek the opinion of both sides of industry;

- at firm level, the employer must consult the elected representatives of the workforce.

1.2.1. The consultation of unions and management by the public authorities: "consultation" and "dialogue"

It is a provision of the legislation that "vocational training and social advancement" shall be the subject of a coordinated and concerted policy, involving in particular the organisations representing employers and employees [11]. As far as technological education is concerned: "provision shall be made for ongoing dialogue between central government..., the employers' and employees' organisations and the teachers' and trainers' representatives" [12].

In the vocational training system, the notion of dialogue would seem to include that of consultation. At least this is what comes to mind on reading the texts: if the legislation uses the term "dialogue", it does so in order to lay down principles; in fact, the bodies in which dialogue is to take place are described as "consultative", and when their functions are described, the law makes provision for each of these bodies to be "consulted" or even "referred to for opinion". However, this statement could be qualified. In the vocational training system, the notion of dialogue seems to be less constraining than that of consultation.

The arrangements for consulting the bodies attached to the public authorities are very informal compared with those for consulting the works committees; moreover, it is certainly the case that the tripartite composition of these bodies - employers, employees and public authorities - make them very important instruments in the debate between the public authorities and the two sides of industry. For some bodies, however, dialogue is, by way of exception, more constraining than consultation. Those bodies expressly included by the legislature among the instruments of a concerted policy have real decision-making power. Thus the departmental committees, which are tripartite and, in theory, consultative bodies, have decision-making powers with respect to the apprenticeship system. The same is true of the Council for the Management of Funds for Vocational Training and Social Advancement and of the Commission for the Ratification of the Qualifications and Diplomas in Technological Education.

It should be pointed out, however, that in these two structures, the representatives of unions and management who sit on them with the representatives of the public authorities are acting in their capacity as experts and not as representatives of their own organisations, which reflects the more technical nature

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[11] Article L 920.1 of the Code of Labour.

[12] Article 14 of law no. 71-577 of 16 July 1971 on the orientation of technological education.

of these bodies.

The degree of power that unions and management are able to exercise with respect to the decisions that are taken is strictly dependent on the composition of the bodies in which they are able to put across their opinions, the way in which those bodies operate and the resources available to them for studying the issuses on which they are consulted.

Whatever the circumstances, the consultative bodies that operate in conjunction with the public authorities differ according to whether it is initial training, apprenticeships of continuing training that is under consideration.

1.2.1.1. The consultative bodies for initial training.

The consultative bodies in the initial training system operate at central government level and are attached to the Ministry of Education, which has the decision-making power. These bodies fall into two categories: the Professional Consultative Committees, or CPCs, which are the consultative bodies favoured by the public authorities in questions of initial training, and the Higher Committee on Education and the Economy.

* The Professional Consultative Committees (CPCs)

Each of these committees must necessarily be concerned with a particular sector of activity. The maximum number of CPCs that may exist is twenty. They are divided on very similar lines to the professional federations. They were set up in order to provide a forum in which the professionals in a particular sector could be consulted on the training needs of that sector and on the organisation of training.

Each committee comprises three equal colleges of ten members each: one is constituted by representatives of the public authorities, one by the employers' representatives and the third by the representatives of the employees; the employers' and employees' representatives belong to the trades or professions that fall within the province of the committee. It is chaired by one member chosen alternately from the employers' college and that of the employees.

For the purposes of gathering information, the representatives of the professions and of the public authorities who sit on the CPCs may set up specialist sub-committees or working parties, either permanent or temporary, to carry out studies on particular questions.

The CPCs attached to the Ministry of Education are coordinated by an "Interprofessional Consultative Committee" (ICC). The ICC deals with questions of concern to all the CPCs attached to the

Ministry and suggests measures to coordinate their activity to the minister. As with the CPCs, the ICC is a tripartite body. The ICC standing committee, which is an offshoot of the ICC, is in fact the active body of the ICC. It is a listening and consultative body that deals with the general problems of technical educations within the area of responsibility of the CPCs.

* The Higher Committee on Education and the Economy

This higher committee is a recent creation, having been set up in 1986. It is attached to the Ministry of Education and its task is to put forward to the minister proposals for bridging the gap between school and the world of work. It has full discretion to study and make proposals on the general systems of technological and vocational training.

It is made up of twelve representatives of the main professional organisations - employers' and employees' - and twelve experts. It is chaired by an eminent person from outside the professions and the Ministry of Education.

1.2.1.2. The consultative bodies for continuing training and the apprenticeship system

The framework for drawing up and implementing training policy is the same for both the continuing training and apprenticeship systems; however, whereas decision on continuing training are taken solely at the central government and regional levels, some decisions on the implementation of apprentice training are taken at department level.

The two sides of industry have a say in the decisions taken by the public authorities through consultative bodies attached to the public bodies. Although each of the levels at which training policies are drawn up has its own consultative bodies, the composition and functioning of all these various consultative bodies are based on the same principles. A common approach will thus be used to examine them.

These consultative bodies are not the only ones which assist the public authorities in taking decisions on the development and implementation of training policy. Other bodies have a role in particular spects of training policy.

1.2.1.3. The general consultative bodies.

These consultative bodies are attached to decision-making bodies which themselves vary according to the level in question. At central government level, the National Council for Vocational Training, Social Advancement and Employment (FPPSE) is attached to the Prime Minister's office; at regional level, the Regional

Committee for Vocational Training, Social Advancement and Employment (CRFPPSE) operates in conjunction with the regional council, on the one hand, and, on the other, with the regional republican commissioner who implements central government decisions at regional level; at department level, the Department Committee for Vocational Training, Social Advancement and Employment (CDFPPSE) operates in conjunction with the republican commissioner for the department and is also a decision-making body for certain matters relating to the apprenticeship system.

Attached to the National Council and the department committees are bodies which carry out some of their functions in the intervals between sittings, a standing committe in the case of the National Council and a standing delegation in the case of the department committees.

The consultative bodies and the groups attached to them have a tripartite structure which brings together the public authorities and representatives of both employers and employees. The employers' and employees' representatives are put forward by their respective organisations and nominated by the public authorities.

The consultation procedure is not formalised, with one exception: when it is consulted on the annual plan for the apprenticeship and continuing training programmes, the regional committee must be informed of the answers to its proposals and observations given by the regional council.

The legislation makes available to the consultative bodies certain resources intended to assist them in the fulfilment of their consultative functions. There is, however, no provision in this respect for the National Council. On the other hand, both the Regional Committee and the Department Committee can set up working parties to study particular problems.

1.2.1.4. The specific consultative bodies

Whereas the general bodies are consulted on the development and implementation of training policy, the task of these bodies is to take cognisance of certain specific aspects of training policy.

* The Council for the Management of Funds for Vocational Training and Social Advancement (CGFFPPSE) decides each year on the allocation of training funds and and pronounces judegement on the various files.

The legislation requires that it be made up of one representative of each of the ministries involved in vocational training and an equal number of people chosen for their expertise in the area. In actual fact, the people selected are

representatives of employers' and employees' organisations, in equal numbers. However, these people do not sit on the council as representatives of their own organisations, but rather in their capacity as experts on training.

* The Coordinating Committee for Regional Apprenticeship Programmes and Continuing Vocational Training

This committee is responsible for checking on the coherence and effectiveness of the vocational training programmes undertaken by central government and the regional authorities.

It is composed of twelve central government representatives, twelve representatives elected by the regional councils and twelve representatives of the employers' and employees' organisations respectively. It should be pointed out that the number of elected representatives from the regions does not correspond to the number of regions that exist in France. The chariman is nominated by the members of the committee. An outside person may be elected. The committee meets at least twice a year but can also be convened to deal with a specific agenda.

* The Technical Committee for the Ratification of Certificates and Diplomas in Technological Education

This committee underwrites on behalf of the state certain diplomas in continuing training by ratifying these diplomas.

The technical ratification committee is composed of twelve central government representatives, on the one hand, and, on the other, of twelve people chosen for their expertise and experience in vocational training. These experts are nominated by the Prime Minister from names put forward by the employees' organisations and the various representative bodies of the professions in question. This committee was set up by decree as a technical committee, and is not therefore a tripartite body. As a result, the members of the committee sit in their capacity as experts, even though they are nominated by employers' and employees' organisations.

The committee draws upon the assistance of rapporteurs and experts for each file. It is this committee which pronounces judgement on requests for judgement.

* The Professional Consultative Committees (CPCs) attached to the Ministry of Labour

These professional consultative bodies have been atached to the Ministry of Labour in accordance with the same principles as the CPCs attached to the Ministry of Education. They are four in number, representing the construction, metals, tertiary and

chemicals sectors. These CPCs are at the disposition of the National Association for the Vocational Training for Adults.

1.2.2. Consultation by employers of the bodies elected by employees

At firm level, employers has full decision-making power in the development and implementation of training policy.

He is obliged to consult the works committee only on the general orientation of training within the firm and on the planning and implementation aspects of the training plan. Only firms with more than 50 employees are obliged to set up a works committee.

Employers are not bound by the observations or the opinions put forward by the committee. The process of consultation comprises various compulsory stages which must take place in the following chronological order: the employer provides the works committee with a certain amount of information intended to clarify the decision to tbe taken; sufficient time for examination of this information must then be allowed between its communication and the meeting at which the works committee formulates its comments; finally, the employer draws up a reasoned response to the comments submitted by the committee. The procedure is thus very formalised.

It should be noted that the law of 26 July 1983 on the democratisation of the public sector goes beyond consultation. It states that in public sector and nationalised firms the training plan must be approved by a resolution passed by the works committee; in the absence of such approval, the training plan must be considered by the board of management and the managing director of the company, after the advice of the supervisory board has been taken.

The works committee comprises the company manager, who chairs the committee, and a delegation elected by the work force.

Consultation on the general orientation of training in the firm is carried out at the employer's initiative. However, it does become compulsory in two cases:

- when an important change affects employment prospects within the firm and the evolvement of employment, investment and technologies;

- three months before the negotiation of a company agreement on training.

On the other hand, the committee must give its view every year on the company training plan. Two meetings are set aside for

this purpose.

The procedure for consultation on the training plan is much more formalised than that for consultation on the general orientation. In particular, as part of the consultative process on the training plan, the managing director must pass on a whole series of documents to the committee; this information must be communicated three weeks before the meeting.

The legislation makes available to the works committee various resources to help it fulfil its task; it may set up a training committee, seek the assistance of experts, carry out reserach and conduct surveys among the work force. The members of the committee may avail themselves of suitable training. All firms with more than 200 employees must set up a training committee.

1.3. Collective negotiation

Collective negotiation leads to "negotiated decisions" between unions and management. As far as vocational training is concerned, negotiation can always be conducted freely within the rules of common law, either at intersectoral, sectoral or firm level. The law of 24 February 1984 introduced compulsory negotiation on training.

1.3.1. Negotiation on training within the framework of common law

Collective agreements on vocational training can be reached at the intersectoral, sectoral or firm level within the general framework of the collective bargaining system.

Collective agreements susceptible of extension that are concluded at sector level must define "the fundamental elements that serve to determine the vocational categories and levels of qualification, and in particular the relationship between the grades and the vocational diplomas and ratified certificates" [13].

1.3.2. The obligation to negotiate on vocational training

The 1984 legislation introduced into the vocational training system an obligation to negotiate on certain questions relating to both the aims and implementation of vocational training. There is no obligation to reach an agreement: when the negotiation process has run its course, the obligation has been fulfilled and the employer regains his decision-making power.

The following mechanism was laid down by the legislation: in sectors already covered by a collective agreement, there is an

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[13] Article L. 133.3 of the Code of Labour.

obligation to open negotiations on the objectives of and resources allocated to continuing training, which must end in an agreement within one year from promulgation of the law. In the absence of sector-level negotiation, there is an obligation to negotiate on the same aspects of training within firms in the sector in question, provided that these firms have more than fifty employees and that they have one or more trade union branches. In the absence of any initiative from the employer, the trade union may request that negotiations be opened.

1.4. The distribution of the decision-making power in joint bodies

In the French system of vocational training, joint management finds its most complete expression in the creation of permanent joint bodies in which unions and management share decision-making powere with respect to the implementation of vocational training.

These joint bodies are found in the various centres at which decisions on the implementation of vocational training are taken: at the national and regional intersectoral level, at the national and regional sectoral level and at the elvel of the training organisations. They do not, however, exist at firm level.

By setting up permanent joint bodies, the two sides of management provided themselves with the means to intervene directly in the implementation of vocational training. Their intervention is no longer limited to expressing their point of view to bodies that retain full-decision making power, or to substituting a negotiated solution for a decision taken unilaterally by the employer.

Decisions on the implementation of vocational training arise in this case from the joint action of the employees' and employers' organisations which share the decision-making power.

There are various categories of joint bodies, each one intervening at different stages in the production of vocational training. The nature and extent of their power of intervention in the implementation of vocational training varies. Thus the joint committe for training and further training and the committee for the coordination of questions relating to personal training leave (COPACIT) are "management" and "follow-up" bodies arising out of the intersectoral agreement of 1970 and its amendments [14].

The joint committees on employment (CPE) "are bodies for

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[14] J.M LUTTRINGER, Le droit de la formation continue, op.cit. p. 60.

consultation between employers' and employees' organisation" [15]. They have a research function on matters related to continuing training and lay down guidelines which are in no way compulsory.

Other organisations actually administer joint training on a joint basis. These joint bodies which manage the funds provided by firms for training purposes include the FAFs and the Fongécifs, which are the result of the joint wishes of unions and management; the ASFOs, set up on the initiative of the employers as training organisations, have a joint further training committee which has some management functions with respect to certain sums paid by firms as their contribution to the financing of training.

Moreover, a certain amount of joint management has been injected into the training organisations, sometimes for administrative purposes, more usually for the purpose of organising training: developing programmes, defining teaching and testing methods, etc...

Thus the joint further training committees of the ASFOs, as well as the councils of the training organisations, which are also joint bodies, have real decision-making power with respect to the organisation of training.

The decision-making power is exercised jointly by the employers' and employees' organisations: the legislation attempts to define the conditions under which the balance of power between unions and managements can be maintained.

The basic principle is that the employers' college and that of the employees should comprise an equal number of representatives; they have equal power, with the chairmanship alternating between an employer and an employee.

2. The issues at stake in the powers of unions and management: their role

The French system of vocational training thus makes available to both sides of industry certain means of influencing the implementation of vocational training in order that the results may fulfil their expectations.

The expectations of employees with respect to vocational training are different from those of employers, just as the expectations of those involved in the various sectors are different from those of the public authorities. As far as

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[15] Employees' representatives and continuous vocational training, Centre Inffo, Guides Techniques, 1985, p. 51.

employees are concerned, vocational training must be a means of achieving promotion for the individual; from the employers' point of view, it must contribute to the development of firms; for their part, the public authorities, who, in establishing the vocational training system in the 1970s, brought together the expectations of both sides, have tended, as unemployment has increased, to make vocational training an instrument of employment policy.

In implementing vocational training, the various actors must fulfil a certain number of functions which follow each other chronologically, notably analysing needs, drawing up and implementing training policies, arranging the financing of training programmes, organising training and dispensing it and checking the conditions under which the activity is produced and carried out.

These various functions, which result in the production of vocational training, become the "issues at stake" for both unions and management, who will seek at each stage of the implementation of vocational training to impose their own point of view in such a way that the results correspond to their expectations of vocational training. However, these various functions only become real power issues to the extent that the two sides of industry are empowered by legislation or agreement to take part in the exercise of such functions: it may be that they have complete control, but it may also be that they intervene only in certain areas or even that they are totally excluded from any control at all. It is thus necessary to define the functions of unions and management at each stage of the implementation of vocational training.

2.1. The financing of vocational training

The financing of vocational training is the sole responsibility of the public authorities and neither unions nor management are authorised to put forward their respective points of view.

The financial resources for continuing training and the apprenticeship system comprise, on the one hand, the state budget and, on the other, the employers' contribution. In 1985, central government spent 10.6 billion francs on continuing training.

2.1.1. The role of unions and management in the distribution of public funds

The public training budget is administered by funds established for the purpose: the Fund for Vocational Training and Social Advancement, the Regional Apprenticeship and Vocational Training Fund, and the National Employment Fund (FNE).

The Fund for Vocational Training and Social Advancement was established to finance programmes considered by the state to be of high priority, whereas the Regional Apprenticeship and Vocational Training Fund is responsible for the financing of the annual programme drawn up by the Regional Council.

Unions and management have a role in the distribution of public funds only at state level, through the management committee of the Fund for Vocational Training and Social Advancement. The management committee, in implementing programmes that fall within the province of central government, decides each year on the distribution of the vocational training fund and gives its judgement on the various files relating to requests for budget allocations.

2.1.2. The role of unions and management in the management of funds created by employers' contributions

Unions and management have a role in the distribution of employers' contributions to the financing of continuing training.

Employers have several ways of fulfilling their obligation to contribute to the financing of continuing training: they may directly finance training programmes of benefit to their own work force, either within their own firm or by concluding an agreement with a training organisation, e.g the Training Associations (ASFOs) set up on the initiative of the employers, or they may contribute to the financing of the various training funds (FAF, Fongécif).

It is when firms make payments to mutual organisations that distribute the funds among member firms or firms covered by the agreement that unions and management have certain responsibilities with respect to the distribution of the mutualised funds: if the organisations that administer the funds are joint bodies (FAF and Fongécif) or were set up on the initiative of employers (ASFOs), they have a joint further training committee which has certain duties with respect to the distribution of funds; in this case the functions of unions and management become merged with those of the joint management body or the joint further training committee; they administer the funds directly.

The resources of the FAFs for employees come from the contributions of the member firms, which contribute 0.1% of their total wages bill for individual training leave and 0.2% for alternating training; they may also receive public funds. They have the authority to mutualise the contributions made to them by firms. The role of the FAFs is to "contribute to the development of training by using their resources to that end".

Within the framework of the regulations laid down by

legislation and statute, the FAFs are free to allocate their resources as they see fit (16); the bill of constitution lays down the rules used to determine the programmes for which funds can be released and the methods for distributing resources among the various programmes. The vocational training system has defined the framework within which this freedom is exercised by laying down the rules governing the allocation of resources and the distribution of surpluses.

The FAFs may use their resources to help various sections of the working population; their primary function is to act in support of employees of member firms. Under certain conditions, they may also help people seeking work, employees taking personal training leave and those taking part in alternating training.

The Fongécifs are joint organisations set up for the express purpose of financing personal training leave. Their main function is to take over payment of the wages of employees requesting such leave.

Their resources come from the contributions made by firms to the financing of personal training leave. They use these sums to pay employees on leave and to cover their course fees as well as to reimburse all or part of the allowance paid to the employees who take their place. They also have a duty to develop a policy that encourages employees to take individual training leave.

The resources of the ASFOs, which provide training, come from payments made by the firms with which they have concluded an agreement. They may also collect funds for alternating training. The funds paid by firms may be subject to mutualisation. As far as the distribution of resources is concerned, the joint further training committee has sole authorisation to decide the conditions under which the mutualised sums paid by firms as their contribution to the financing of vocational training shall be used.

Unions and management have just decided to establish a contingency fund for alternating training for the sums paid by firms to finance this type of training. This fund is jointly administered.

2.2. The orientation of vocational training

The orientation of initial training is determined solely by central government and neither unions nor management have any means of exerting influence on the decisions taken by the state authorities.

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16) J.M. LUTTRINGER, Le droit de la formation continue, p.75.

The same is not true of continuing training and the apprenticeship system. In this case, the means by which unions and management can influence the orientation of vocational training vary according to whether it is the direction laid down by the state authorities or that decided on by the firms or profession that is involved.

2.2.1. The role of unions and management in continuing training and apprenticeship policy drawn up by central government.

The vocational training system supplies both sides of industries with the means of influencing central government policy on continuing training and apprenticeships, and more particularly on the drawing up and implementation of that policy ([17]). Drawing up a policy means the establishment of priorities, whereas implementation means the choice of techniques used in order to put into practice the policy that has already been drawn up, either assent or agreement ([18]). Here again, the responsibilities of unions and management merge with the functions of the consultative bodies in which they are invited to make known their point of view.

The functions of the consultative bodies vary according to whether they are bodies acting at state, regional or department level.

2.2.1.1. The functions of the consultative bodies acting at national level

The main task of the national council for life-long training, social advancement and employment (FFPSE) is to give its opinion on the orientation of the vocational training and apprenticeship policies drawn up the government.

During the last two meetings of the national council which were held in 1982 and 1984, the debates centred on the choice of priorities to be made by the state with respect to continuing training: in 1982, the entry of young people into the labour market, and in 1984 the development of training in various sectors (electronics, construction, agriculture and food, foreign trade).

The standing committee of the national council is consulted by the government on the implementation of vocational training policy; in particularly, it is consulted on any draft legislation, regulations and circulars emanating from the

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[17]) Article L. 910.1 of the Code of Labour Law.

[18]) See above.

government.

In the period between meetings of the national council, the committee carries out some of the consultative functions of the council, particularly in matters relating to apprenticeships.

It is also consulted when an agreement is being concluded on the development of training at sector level.

The coordinating committee for regional apprenticeship and continuing vocational training programmes ensures that the vocational training programmes initiated by central government or the regional authoriteis are coherent and effective. It may propose any measures that would help to harmonise regional programmes and to coordinate the orientations adopted by central government and the regional authorities. This coordination helps to ensure equality of opportunity in gaining access to apprenticeships and to coordinate the orientation of training.

2.2.1.2. The functions of the regional committee of the FPPSE

The regional commitee helps to draw up and implement regional vocational training and employment policies. Its task is to encourage the implementation, at regional level, of a coherent training and employment policy by taking into account the specific needs of its particular region.

In particular, the regional committee is consulted by the president of the regional council during the determination of the regional training policy, and subsequently, during the implementation of that policy, on the proposed annual programme for apprentice training and continuing vocational training; it is also consulted on the proposed programmes of aid for the running and equipping of training courses and on the authorisation of proposed courses, with particular respect to the payment of trainees who have to be financed by the regional fund for apprenticeships and continuing training.

It is consulted on the conclusion of agreements for the development of training when such agreements are concluded between the state and a firm; as far as the apprenticeship system is concerned, it gives its opinion on the agreements by which apprentice training centres (CFAs) are set up.

2.2.1.3. The functions of the departmental committee of the FPPSE

The main function of the departmental committee is to help to implement at department level the vocational training policy drawn up at regional level. In particular, it is consulted by the region on the regional apprentice and vocational training

programmes and on the authorisation of courses with respect to the payment of trainess.

In addition, the departmental committee has some decision-making powers on certain matters relating to apprenticeships, particularly with respect to the appointment of course lead

2.2.2. The role of unions and management in defini e orientation of continuing training at sector l

The two sides of industry are able to express their views vocational training through two institutions: a joint body, the joint employment committee, through which they can intervene directly, and through collective bargaining.

The joint employment committees determine the orientation of vocational training for the particular industry in terms of its skill requirements.

They draw up and keep up to date a list of the courses that they consider to be of recognised value for employees in the industry and which fit into the priorities that they have established for the industry and region that they represent.

Sector-level negotiation on the aims and implementation of training was introduced by the law of 24 February 1984; such negotiation contributes to the determination of sector policies in that it is necessarily concerned with the nature of training programmes and the priority to be attached to them.

2.2.3. The role of unions and management in defining the orientation of continuing training at firm level

Employees can influence employers' decisions on questions of continuing training in two ways: through consultation of the works committee and through any negotiations that may be conducted in respect of training.

The works committee is consulted on both the general orientation of training in the firm and on the annual training plan.

* Consultation on general orientation

The works committee must be consulted on the general orientation of vocational training within the firm in the context of the economic prospects and evolvement of employment, investment and technologies within the firm.

In addition, it must also be consulted whenever an important change affects either the economic prospects of the firm or the evolvement of employment, investment and technologies.

* Consultation on the training plan

The works committee has a duty each year to report on the firm's training plan.

Its report deals:

- on the one hand, with the implementation of the previous year's training plan,

- and, on the other, with the proposed plan for the coming year.

The proposed training plan must take account of the orientation of vocational training to which the committee has given prior consideration, the outcome of the negotiations on vocational training provided for in the Code of Labour Law, and, if necessary, of the equality of opportunities plan drawn up within the firm.

Any firm-level negotiations on training that may take place will relate to the nature of the programmes implemented within the firm and the priority attached to them.

2.3 The organisation of training

A whole sequence of operations combine to produce training: production of training in accordance with changing needs, definition of programme content and teaching methods, testing, authorisation of programmes...

The legislation makes provision for both sides of industry to have a role in this area, not only in the case of continuing training but also in that of initial training.

2.3.1. The role of unions and management in the organisation of initial training

Unions and management play a role in determining the principles by which the initial training system is organised and also in implementing those principles at sector level.

It is through the Higher Committee on Education and the Economy that the two sides of industry play a role in the determining the principles according to which the initial training system is organised. The aim of the Higher Committee is to provide a framework for on-going dialogue between the Ministry of Education and its economic partners. It implements initiatives, carries out studies and makes proposals on matters relating to general technological and vocational training and to research on education and training. It may also be consulted by

the minister on any problems connected with the relationship between education and the economy.

The Professional Consultative Committees (CPCs) attached to the Ministry of Education determine the organisation of training at sector level. It is their duty to meet as far as possible the training needs of firms.

They analyse the skill needs of each sector and draw up, on the basis of their analysis, reports and proposals on the definition, content and evolvement of training in the sector for which they are responsible, on the development of training resources in accordance with the evolvement of employment opportunities and needs within the sector in question and, more particularly, on any technical or pedagogical matters connected with the determination, implementation and ratification (diplomas) of training programmes and teaching methods.

2.3.2. The role of unions and management in the organisation of continuing training

The CPCs attached to the Ministry of Labour fulfil the same functions for the National Association for the Training of Adults as the CPCs attached to the Ministry of Education.

In certain training organisations set up by employers, such as the ASFOs, the joint council for further training fulfils a certain number of functions with respect to the organisation of training. In particular, the council is responsible for drawing up training programmes and checking on their progress. In addition, the council lays down the general entry conditions for young people, the general conditions for transfer from one class to another and checks on the implementation of the guidelines laid down in these various areas.

As far as the ratification of training programmes is concerned, the function of the technical committee for the ratification of certificates and diplomas of technological education is to give formal approval on behalf of the state to training programmes that are not the direct responsibility of the Ministry of Education ([19]). This commission ratifies the qualifications awarded by organisations that fall outside the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education.

The decisions taken by the ratification committee are not in principle binding on employers, unless they are bound by a

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[19]) The ratification process may also involve initial training qualifications, but since these qualifications are defined in principle by the Ministry of Education, it will relate rather to qualifications obtained through continuous training.

collective agreement to recognise such decisions. On this point, the Code of Labour Law stipulates that collective agreements must define the basic elements used to determine vocational classifications, qualification levels and, in particular, the grades relating to the ratified diplomas and certificates, provided that the diplomas or certificates have been established or ratified for more than a year.

2.4 Control of the production of training and the functioning of the training system

The two sides of industry have a few, though limited means of controlling the production of training and the functioning of the training system.

Thus the approval ([20]) by the public authorities of mutualising organisations such as the FAF, Fongécif and ASFO is subject to the advice of the National Council of the FPPSE. Moreover, the Copacif, a joint organisation, approves the Fongécifs [21].

The joint council established within the state-aided training organisations is consulted during the technical and pedagogic checks carried out by state departments.

The works committee has certain functions when training is carried out at production sites. In particular, it is informed whether the training has been given by staff who have received suitable training in teaching methods, whether it has been conducted in accordance with a pre-determined sequence and whether the end-of-course results have been evaluated.

Conclusion to Part I

The role of unions and management in the French vocational training, as defined by the current training system, is still largely the result of the government's desire, in setting up the system, to give wide-ranging powers to both sides of industry, without going so far as to call into question a certain number of principles that underlie the French system, notably the principle that the full decision-making powers of the public authorities and managing directors should not be undermined.

Within these limits, the training system does give both unions and management quite considerable means of influencing decisions.

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[20]) Approval is a form of control: its aim is to ensure that the organisation under scrutiny conforms to the regulations currently in force.

[21] See appendix for list of initials used.

Taking into account the complexity of the system that we have attempted to describe to the best of our abilities in this first part, it would seem useful briefly to summarise the broad outlines of the system while distinguishing between initial training, continuing training and the apprenticeship system.

* As far as initial training is concerned, where the public authorities are the only actor, central government has overall responsibility, while the local authorities have specific functions. The two sides of industry interven in the decision-making process only at central government level, through the two categories of tripartite consultative bodies: the Professional Consultative Committees intervene at sector level to analyse needs and develop new training programmes, teaching methods and diplomas; the Higher Committee on Education and the Economy carries out surveys and puts forward proposals on general technological and vocational training and conducts research in education and training.

* In the continuing training system, decisions are taken at various levels: public authorities, trade or profession, intersectoral, firm, training market.

In the case of continuing training policy financed by public funds, central government and the regional authorities share responsibility: the regional authorities have overall responsibility, while central government has specific functions. The two sides of industry are involved in the decision-making process at both levels.

At central government level, they express their views on the development and implementation of continuing training policy through a tripartite consultative body, the National Council for Vocational Training, Social Advancement and Employment (CNFPPSSE); sitting side by side with representatives of central government on decision-making bodies, not as representatives of their own associations or trade unions but as experts in vocational training, they are actually part of the decision-making process. In particular, as members of the Council for the Management of the Fund for Vocational Training and Social Advancement (CGFFPPSE), they allocate the public funds set aside for training, and as members of the Technical Committee for the Ratification of Certificates and Diplomas in Technological Education, the ratify those certificates and diplomas that are not the responsibility of the Ministry of Education.

At regional level, through the Regional Committee of the FFPSE, a tripartite consultative body, they advise the public authorities on the development and implementation of their continuing training policy.

The Committee for the Coordination of Regional Apprenticeship and Continuing Training Programmes, a consultative bodies with equal numbers of representatives from central government, the regional authorities and the two sides of industry, coordinates the training programmes set up by the individual regions and those implemented jointly by central government and the regions.

In the case of continuing training financed by firms, decisions are taken at inter-sectoral, sectoral and firm level.

Unions and management participate in the drawing up of norms through the collective bargaining process.

At sector level, they decide on the orientation of continuing training policy for that sector through the Joint Committees on Employment (CPEs). They negotiate on the the objectives and implementation of training.

As members of joint bodies, which may be set up at the various decision-making levels, they decide on the allocation of training funds provided by firms. The Training Insurance Funds (FAF), set up at sector, inter-sectoral, national regional and department level, manage the funds allocated to the financing of training falling within the scope of company training plans, individual training leave and alternating training. The Funds for the Management of Individual Training Leave (Fongécifs), established on a regional basis at the inter-sectoral level, are responsible solely for the administration of individual training leave. The activities of the Fongécifs is coordinated at national level by the Committee for the Management of Individual Training Leave (Cogécif). The funds contributed by firms may also be administered by Training Associations (ASFO), established and managed by the employers. These ASFOs may only manage funds allocated to the financing of employee training falling within the scope of company training plans and laternating training, excluding individual training leave which must be administered by joint bodies. The ASFOs have joint further training committees which decide on the distribution of mutualised funds.

At firm level, the employer has full decision-making powers with respect to continuing training. Employees are involved in the decision-making process through a consultative body, the works committee, on which the employer and elected representatives of the work force sit. This body gives its opinion on the general orientation of training and the annual training plan. In addition, in the absence of a sector-level agreement, there is an obligation to negotiate on the objectives of and resources allocated to training.

As far as the implementation of training is concerned, there are training organisations which provide a public service, such as the National Agency for the Vocational Training of Adults

(AFPA), which are administered by a tripartite board of management and which have at their disposal Professional Consultative Committees (CPC), which are also tripartite bodies, with the same responsibilities with respect to continuing training as the CPCs attached to the Ministry of Education have with respect to initial training. Other training organisations receiving state funds, and even the ASFOs, have a joint further training committee which has to be informed about the organisation of training.

* As far as the <u>apprenticeship system</u> is concerned, the public authorities play the leading role; the regional authorities have overall repsonsibility, while central government and the departments have specific functions. There are channels through which unions and management can express their views at these three levels.

At central government level, through the National Council of the FPPSE, a tripartite consultative body, they are consulted on the development and implementation of central government policy on apprentice training; at regional level, through the regional committee of the FPPSE, which is the same kind of body, they are consulted on regional policy; at department level, the tripartite consultative body which constitutes the departmental committee of the FPPSE and its apprenticeship committee act as a decision-making body, particularly in approving course leaders and in carrying out disciplinary functions with respect to the trainers.

As far as the organisation of training is concerned, it falls for the most part within the scope of the Ministry of Education, which receives advice from the CPCs.

PART TWO

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN DIFFERENT SECTORS THE EXAMPLE OF THE CONSTRUCTION AND METAL INDUSTRIES AND BANKING

The first part of this report presented the general conditions in which unions and management play their role in the planning and implementation of vocational training considered as a sort of "system". As far as implementation is concerned, there is, within this general framework, a wide range of different situations at sector level, both in terms of the structures that each sector has chosen to set up and in terms of the way in which the "actors" play their roles within these structures. As we have seen, these differences may lie in the fact that they do not have the same institutionally recognised place in the same end result, or in different behaviours arising out of their own internal heterogeneity.

We shall not examine in detail here the differences in behaviour specific to such and such an organisation that plays a leading role in one sector or another. We shall focus instead on the structural influence that may be exerted by, among other things, the extent to which particular sectors have long-established traditions of dialogue, or even "partnership", between unions and management. Thus it is no accident that, in establishing its mutual training fund, the construction industry chose to set up a joint FAF, or training insurance fund, while the metal industry favoured an ASFO.

Similarly, it is no accident that, as we shall see, the various sectors do not attach the same importance to initial vocational training, apprenticeships and continuous training. Thus the metal industry, for the same reason as the construction industry but in a completely different way, has continued to favour apprenticeships over other training methods for young people, while the banking sector has always considered youth training to be its own responsibility and that the Ministry of Education should concern itself only with general education and training.

Finally, in order to locate the various sectors in relation to each other, we should not ignore differences in the structures of the firms and plants of which each sector is made up- particularly their structures according to size - as well as in the structure of the labour force. Differences in the structure of the labour force mean that firms occupy different places in the labour market and force them to adopt very different solutions to the problems of labour force management. Thus it has been possible to distinguish four main categories of sectors among which are distributed the sectors that we have examined (1):

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1) F. AMAT, "Emploi des jeunes et politique de lutte contre le chômage: le cas de la France entre 1975 et 1985", CEREQ, Working Paper no.22, March 1986, 95 p.

- the banks belong to a group of sectors characterised by a high level of labour stability and relatively high inter-establishment mobility which reflects, however, internal changes in the large companies that make up this sector. They have only limited recourse to trainees, and those they do use have an advanced level of education.

- the construction industry, on the other hand, is one of the sectors with a very high level of mobility (20 to 25% of the labour force each year) which make great use of skilled or semi-skilled trainees who are trained through the apprenticeship system.

- the capital goods sector, finally, belongs to the group of sectors which lie somewhere in between the first two. It has a relatively stable labour force and makes moderate use of trainees for manual jobs, which still account for a significant proportion of total employment in the sector. In this respect, they usually recruit from among those holding a CAP or a BEP, and to a lesser extent from the apprenticeship system.

On a more general level, therefore, it can be said that there exist sectoral sub-systems within the vocational training system, in which the "instruments" by which vocational training is implemented are linked together in different ways. As a result, the relationships between the sector and the firm and between the intersectoral and regional levels also differ; it is these differences which determine the relative importance of the bodies within each sub-system, from both the functional and the strategic point of view. This framework makes it possible to deal more precisely with the issues at stake in the role and composition of these bodies.

In other words, it could be said that the important thing in assessing the role of unions and management in vocational training within a particular sector is not whether there are a large number of joint bodies, but the nature and operating conditions of the bodies which play a strategic role in guiding the structures that contribute to labour management within the sector.

CHAPTER 1 - THE CONSTRUCTIONS AND PUBLIC WORKS SECTOR

The construction and public works sector is one of the largest sectors of French industry. It employs 8% of the economically active population and accounts for 7.5% of GDP.

It is characterised by high levels of dispersal and heterogeneity among the companies that make it up. There is a considerable number of small firms with less than 10 employees and several firms with several hundred employees. In the Provence-Alpes-Cote d'Azur region, 10,000 of the 12,000 firms have fewer than 10 employees, while only 5 have more than 500.

It is a highly differentiated sector. A distinction can in fact be made between construction firms and public works firms. The large companies are found mainly in the public works sector, while construction firms have mostly retained an artisanal character. This differentiation is reflected in the employers' organisation: there are two employers' federations in the sector: the Fédération Nationale du Batiment (FNB, or Federation of Building Trades Employers) and the FNTP (Fédération Nationale des Travaux Public, or National Federation of Public Works Companies). They often act together, sometimes separately. On the employees' side, all the federations are federations of the "Construction and Public Works Industries".

The sector is currently going through hard times; the classic phenomenon of a reduction in activity leading to a large number of job losses has further aggravated the difficulties specific to the construction industry: workers with very low skill levels, an ageing work force and very high labour mobility. It is also having to deal with significant technological changes.

The construction and public works sector for a long time favoured apprenticeships as the means of entry and qualification for young people and of meeting the needs of firms. Even today, the industry remains firmly attached to this method of training. However, most initial training is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. Of the 63,200 young people trained in 1985, 40% received their training within the industry, 55% on courses organised by the Ministry of Education and 5% in the private sector.

As far as the implementation of vocational training is concerned, the construction industry is characterised by a long-established structure in which joint management by unions and employers plays a large part. In accounting for this structure, both employers' and employees' organisations put forward the following opinion: "joint management of general social questions (retirement, welfare) is long established in the construction and public works sector. There is a wide range of different trades within the industry, work places are very dispersed and there is

thus a high degree of isolation and individualism. A system of joint management encourages a common approach to problem-solving. The building site serves to strengthen dialogue between employer and employee; it is a very temporary work place, a place of construction, consensus and coordination between various trades, a place at which risks are jointly confronted and where conflicts are resolved in the interests of bringing the job to a satisfactory conclusion. The nomadic aspect of life on the building site strengthens this solidarity between bosses and workers".

1. The foundations of joint management

Various joint bodies have been set up. The CCCA (Comité Central de Coordination de l'Apprentissage du Bâtiment et des Travaux Public, or Central Coordinating Committee for Apprenticships in the Construction and Public Works Sectors), established in 1942, is a body representing the whole sector whose task it is to formulate overall policy for the industry on the initial training of skilled workers. Two National Joint Committees on Employment (CNPE), one for the construction industry and one for public works, were set up as a result of the signing in 1969 of the intersectoral agreement on job security which made provision for the establishment of such committees. As a result of the national collective agreement of 29 June 1972, the Joint Group for Life-long Training in the Construction and Public Works Industries (GFC-BTP) was established in order to administer a Training Insurance Fund (FAF) that is responsible throughout the industry for the collection of the compulsory contributions to continuing training.

Collective bargaining on vocational training has recently taken a further step forward with the conclusion from 1984 onwards of a whole series of agreements.

2. The instruments of training

In both the organisational and training systems, the basic instruments of worker participation are joint organisations.

2.1 The organisational structure

The organisational system is made up of the CNPE and the GFC-BTP, with the CCCA as the pivotal instrument in the system. In addition, there are consultative committees for the construction industry attached to the Ministries of Education and Labour.

2.1.1. The CNPEs

There are two separate national joint committees on employment, one for the construction industry and the other for public works; however, the two committees meet together.

The composition of these two committees is as follows: 10 representatives of the employers' organisations and 10 representatives of the employees' organisations, 2 from the CGT, 2 from the CFDT, 2 from the FO, 2 from the CFE-CGC and 2 from the CFTC.

The chairman is chosen from the representatives of the employers' organisations.

The CNPEs decide on the orientation of training and on sectoral and regional priorities; they prepare and update the list of courses to be included in these priorities.

These two CNPEs have set up a joint body: this is the CFC-BTP, which is responsible for secretarial and organisational functions. The CNPEs have delegated to this body the task of preparing and updating the list of courses to be included in the sectoral and regional priorities.

Over the last two years, the main tasks of the joint body have been related to the definition of sectoral and regional priorities for continuing vocational training, the inclusion of courses on the CNPEs' national list and examination of the courses proposed by the regional organisation of the GFC-BTP.

2.1.2. The GFC-BTP

The GFC-BTP is the Training Insurance Fund for the construction and public works industries. It intervenes in continuing training. The extension by the government of the collective agreement by which it was set up made membership of the GFC-BTP compulsory for all firms in the construction and public works sectors with more than 10 employees.

Its board of management is a joint body. It has 20 members, 10 representatives from the employers' federations and 2 representatives from each of the following trade unions: CGT, CFDT, FO, CFTC and CGC.

The chairmanship alternates between an employer and employee.

The GFC-BTP receives a financial contribution from the member firm, the 0.1% of total wages bill payable for individual training leave and uses the 0.3% payable for alternating training for financing alternating training programmes for young people.

The GFC-BTP is represented in each region by a Regional Association for Continuing Training (AREF). Like the GFC-BTP, these AREFs are joint organisations. Their task is to adapt the general policies of the GFC-BTP to the specific needs of the region and to implement the necessary programmes.

Any funds not used by firms are mutualised each year. They are used by the GFC-BTP and its AREFs to set up training programmes for employees as part of firms' training plans or for those seeking personal training leave. The mutualised funds are also used to finance research projects and pilot studies with a view to deciding on priority measures.

2.1.3. The CCCA

The CCCA is a joint body, operating at industry level, whose task it is to develop and improve the initial training of future skilled workers, both through full-time training courses and through alternating training.

The CCCA is divided structurally into several levels. At the national level, there is a committee of 16 members, 8 representatives of the employers' federations and 8 from the trade unions, who constitute a genuine board of management within which employers and employees decide on orientation and policy and supervise implementation. At department level, the GDA (Groupement Départemental d'Apprentissage, or Department Apprenticeship Group) is administered by a committee of management comprising 12 members (6 from each side of industry) which decides on local initial training policy within the framework of instructions from the CCCA. At regional level, the regional tier of the GDAs (ERL-GDA) is a coordinating and consultative body of the GDAs and the associations administering CFAs (Apprentice Training Centres) in the region.

The CCCA is funded by the payments of 0.3% of their wages bill made by firms in the building and public works sector. The committee determines the distribution of funds in accordance with the priorities that it draws up for improving the quality of the training offered.

Within the framework of the policy orientation determined by the CNPE-BTP, the CCCA formulates and implements an initial training policy. It is within the context of this training that the decision by the trades people in the industry in favour of the apprenticeship system must be located. The CCCA implements this policy by organising apprentice training in the Apprentice Training Centres (CFAs).

For several years, the CCCA, through the CFAs, has also contributed to continuing training for craftsmen and other employees. It also makes use of the various programmes for

alternating training arising out of the agreement of 26 October 1983 on alternating training, which was intended to provide schemes to supplement the apprenticeship system.

The CCCA has formulated an overall policy for the various groups of workers for which it is responsible. In particular, it has developed a training policy based on the principle of alternation. In order to implement this policy, it trains instructors and equips training centres. It plays a role in the organisation of training by defining the skill content of the trades and the teaching methods to be used.

2.1.4. The consultative committees (CPCs) for the construction industry

There is a consultative committee attached to the Ministry of Education whose function is to make known the views of those in the industry on initial training and on changes in training needs and to contribute to the preparation and content of new training programmes and the diplomas arising out of them. However, with respect to initial training, the industry is also represented on other CPCs: construction materials, metallurgy, wood and applied arts. There is also a CPC for the construction industry attached to the Ministry of Labour which fulfils the same role on matters of continuing training for the AFPA.

2.2 The training organisations

In view of the popularity of the apprenticeship system within the construction industry, the CFAs play a leading role among the training organisations.

There are 84 CFAs currently providing for about 37,000 young people. By far the majority of these CFAs, 70 in all, are administered by a joint association with a board of management composed of equal numbers of representatives of employers' and employees' organisation; the chairmanship alternates between an employer and an employee. The association administers the CFA within the framework of the official regulations and of the agreements concluded with the CCCA.

3. Sectoral and other agreements

Recent years have seen a development of policies arising out of agreements concluded between unions and management in the Building and Public Works sector. This development is a consequence, on the one hand, of various incentives to

negotiation that form part of the new vocational training structure set up by the socialist government, by unions and management and by the legislature and, on the other, of the desire of the FNTP to conclude separate agreements with the employees' organisations that reflect the specific characteristics of the public works sector.

In addition, an agreement on the development of training at sector level has been concluded between central government and the CFC-BTP.

3.1. Collective agreements arising out of legislative or contractual incentives

In pursuance of the obligation to negotiate at sector level on the objectives and instruments of continuing vocational training that was established by the law of 24 February 1984, an agreement on the vocational training of employees in firms in the building and public works sector was concluded on 20 February 1985 between the FNB and the FNTP, on the one hand, and the construction and public works federations of the CFTC, CGC and the FO, on the other.

In accordance with the law, this agreement relates to the objectives and instruments of training. It defines end results, priorities and instruments. We shall concentrate our attention on certain points which appear to reflect the specificity of vocational training policy in the sector.

The definition of the end results of training clearly reflects the desire of the parties to the agreement to make vocational training an instrument to match the technological changes that are essential to the modernisation of the sector: "for several years, the construction and public works sector has been confronted by important changes arising out of economic and technological factors. While these changes appear less spectacular than those in other sectors, they are no less profound, and in order to accommodate them firms have had to adapt their activity and employment conditions. The parties to the agreement consider that the ability to control these changes must be a fundamental objective for firms. It is their view that vocational training, by using to full advantage the human resources of the firm, constitutes one of the basic means of achieving that aim".

It is further specified that, in order to prepare men for these changes, it is necessary to develop their "autonomy". The link between training and technological change is referred to in the definition of priority programmes; the desire of both unions and management for a more highly skilled work force is also reflected in the definition of these priority programmes.

In addition, the parties to the agreement consider it useful to recall in the preamble that there is a tradition of alternating training in the industry: "with respect to alternating training as defined in the national intersectoral agreement of 26 October 1983 and the law of 24 February 1984, the parties to the agreement would point out that the industry possesses, thanks to the apprenticeship system, wide and long-established experience of this type of training, which links the acquisition of general and technological knowledge with practical experience of working in a firm in a trade related to the training received. It is their view that, taking account of the quality and efficiency of the apprenticeship system in enabling young people to enter the labour market, it is a system that must be used as a reference point for the implementation within the industry of new alternating training contracts."

Various agreements on alternating training have been concluded as a result of the application throughout the sector of the intersectoral agreement of 26 October 1983 on alternating training. One agreement on the implementation of programmes of alternating agreement in the construction and public works industries was signed on 5 December 1984, while a second agreement on the implementation of alternating training in firms in the sector with fewer than 10 employees was signed on 21 January 1985. A third agreement on the promotion of alternating training programmes and the simplification of administrative procedures was signed on 26 July 1985. This last agreement has the merit of unifying the procedures that firms have to follow and, by giving the mutualising organisations responsibilities that go beyond a strictly financial role, enables them to advise and support firms in the preparation of applications for powers in this area and of the contracts themselves.

3.2. The agreements signed by the FNTP for the public works industry

A national collective agreement on the implementation of retraining programmes was signed on 23 July 1984 between the FTNP on the one hand and the CFDT, CFTC, CGC and FO on the other. This agreement provides funding for the retraining of adult employees from the 0.2% of total wages bill allocated to financing alternating training for young people. This agreement has not been implemented. The government refuses to accept it on the grounds that it diverts the 0.2% contribution from young people towards adults in need of retraining.

The agreement on the procedures for redundancy on economic grounds concluded between the FNTP and the CGC, CFDT, FO and CFTC contains a section on training which makes provision in particular for training courses of one or two years' duration and leading under normal circumstances to a job, with better payment and the advantages of the collective industry agreement for those

attending such courses.

3.3. The agreement on the development of programmes of life-long vocational training in the construction and public works sector

This agreement was signed on 17 June 1986 between the government and the GFC-BTP. It makes provision for financial support from the government for a qualifications policy for employees in the sector in respect of priority objectives as defined jointly by government and the industry.

4. The tensions between actors in the functioning of organisations

Certain criticisms have been made by both sides of industry on the functioning of joint management itself and also of the functioning of the industry's vocational training system.

4.1. The criticisms of joint management

Some representatives of firms in the sector blame joint management for having changed the decision-making bodies into "protest platforms" from which the union representatives, particularly those from the CGT, express their ideological positions on the training-related matters that are the subject of the debates. It would be impossible under these circumstances for the joint bodies to address problems from the technical point of view, which is what they were set up to do.

Some of the union representatives, particularly those from the CGT, consider joint representation within the building and public works sector to be "unequal", since representation on the joint bodies is "50% employers, 50% employees", with one vote for each trade union, whatever its representation within the industry. Consequently, the construction section of the CGT has only one vote, the same as any minority trade union, whereas it is in fact the union with the largest number of members in the industry. Under these circumstances, while it is easy to maintain unity within the employers' camp, the apparent equality, which does not in fact reflect reality in terms of the representativeness of trade union organisations in the sector, may well be an obstacle to debate.

4.2. The criticisms of the functioning of joint management

The vocational training system in the industry appears to be a perfectly coherent system in which various joint bodies, each of which is autonomous, share the functions required for the implementation of vocational training.

However, this system cannot always function as its instigators had initially imagined. Owing to long term changes the separation of tasks has in fact become blurred, which might cause malfunctions and even conflict between the various bodies which manage the programmes if they get themselves into the position of competing with each other.

The CCCA and the GFC-BTP both have a leading role in the implementation of vocational training in the sector. As far as the CNPEs are concerned, they have delegated their responsabilities for establishing priorities for training programmes and for compiling the national list to a joint body in which the GFC-BTP plays infact a leading role . A few years ago when the number of apprenticeships began to fall considerably, the CCCA tried at the time to use the CFAs by opening them up to new audiences within the industry, particularly for the continuing training of employees in the construction sector, which depends upon the GFC-BTP policy. In this case the GFC-BTP drives training actions which are realised by training establishments consider theCCCA authority. In order to assure a global harmony, a solution was devised by which the boards of the CCCA and the GFC-BTP were to meet on a regular basis.

CHAPTER II - THE METAL INDUSTRY

The metal industry is the largest industrial sector in France. It employs around 12% of the economically active population (a total of 2,206,300 as at 1 January 1985).

It is characterised by a high degree of heterogeneity: small firms co-exist with firms with a work force of several thousands. It is currently in the middle of a process of modernisation and is extremely subject to international competitiveness. The modernisation programme is reflected both in processes of restructuring, which have led to significant movements in the labour force, and in the urgent need to come to terms with technological change.

As far as training is concerned, greater stress is now being laid throughout the industry on the need for higher skill levels. With respect to the implementation of training, the metal industry is characterised by the fact that it is the employers who have retained control, at least as far as the training of employees within the context of firms' training plans is concerned. The fundamental principle to which employers in the sector subscribe is that training is a management function that cannot be shared; thus the training system, even when it is the responsibility of agencies external to the firm, could not be managed on a joint basis; moreover, the management of any activity at all, and particularly training, could not be

organised on a joint basis, because joint management is a source of opposition to change. Given this background, it is not difficult to understand that joint management plays only a secondary role in the implementation of vocational training in the metal industry, particularly in view of the fact that it was the employers who took the initiative in establishing a vocational training system for the sector.

Employers in the metal industry are represented on all social questions by the Union of Metal and Mining Industries (UIMM); the UIMM is the most powerful federation in the CNPF (Confédération du Patronat Français, equivalent of the CBI in the UK) and represents some 15,000 companies. It has made available a great deal of resources for the implementation of its social policy. When the general training system was established by the intersectoral agreement of 9 July 1970 and the law of 16 July 1971, the UIMM took the initiative by setting, up on the basis of the general system, a vocational training system for the sector as a whole, which took into account its own ideas; the unions made no attempt to impose their own ideas on the system.

1. The foundations of joint management

The UIMM's fundamental principle is not to countenance joint management of the training of employees that falls within the scope of firms' training plans. However, this principle does not exclude a certain degree of joint management in the implementation of vocational training.

Thus in pursuance of the national intersectoral agreement of 1969 on job security which made provision for the establishment of a National Joint Committee on Employment in all sectors, such a committee was set up in the metal industry with responsibility for determining the general orientation of training in the metal industry.

Moreover, as far as continuing training is concerned, it is only the financial management of employee training within the framework of firms' training plans from which joint management is excluded. The educational aspects of vocational training as well as the training of employees which does not fall within the scope of firms' training plans, such as personal training leave, are in fact subject to joint management.

Thus the ASFOs in the metal industry, which are training organisations established and managed by the employers' federation within the industry whose task it is to collect and manage employers' contributions to the financing of vocational training, have always had a joint in-service training committee which has responsibilities in matters related to teaching.

Personal training leave for employees in the metal industry is administered by the Fongécifs, which are joint intersectoral bodies.

The apprenticeship system is administered in exactly the same way as continuing training falling within the scope of firms' training plans. Although the management of the Apprentice Training Centres (CFAs) is the responsibility of the employers' organisations, the CFAs do have a joint committee for further training.

Collective negotiation on vocational training has hardly developed at all in the metal industry. A single accord has been signed at sector level on the objectives and instruments of continuing vocational training in pursuance of the obligation to negotiate established by the law of 24 February 1984.

A committment to develop training has been signed by the government and the UIMM.

2. The instruments of vocational training

2.1. The guidance system

This guidance system comprises the National Joint Committee on Employment for the metal industry (the CNPE), the ASFOs and the Fongécifs. There are also joint consultative committees for the metal industry attached to the Ministries of Education and Labour.

2.1.1. The CNPE for the metal industry

The CNPE for the metal industry determines the orientation of vocational training in the sector and compiles a list of courses appropriate to the guidelines laid down.

It is a joint body made up of an equal number of trade union (CGT, CFDT, FO, CFTC, CFE and CGC) and employers' representatives (UIMM).

Regional joint committees on employment have been established for each region. For some time they played an important role in matters relating to personal training leave: indeed, since no finance was provided for individual training leave, it was their function to approve those courses for which employers would continue to pay employees' wages. Since the amendment of 21 September 1982 made provision for independent finance for personal training leave, the regional joint committees on employment have fallen into disuse.

2.1.2. The ASFOs

The ASFOs were set up essentially to help firms provide training within the framework of their training plans.

The ASFOs, which are in fact training organisations set up and administered by the metal industry employers' organisations, collect and administer the funds contributed by firms for the financing of training. The existence of two FAFs (in the Sarthe and Champagne Ardennes regions), which are joint bodies with the same collection and fund management functions, is an exception.

Firms in the metal industry pay their training funds to ASFOs set up at department level. They may be ASFOs for the metal industry set up in those departments in which the metal industry is well established by a local federation of metal industry employers affiliated to the UIMM. They may also be intersectoral ASFOs, established by employers' federationa affiliated to the CNPF which act on behalf of various sectors and which are not organised in the form of FAFs, in departments in which there are not many metal firms.

The ASFOs are administered by the employers' organisation that set them up. The board of management is made up of only of employers' representatives, who take all decisions relating to the management of funds for continuing training.

Since 1971, the ASFOs in the metal industry have had a joint committee on further training.

Representatives of employees and employers sit on these further training committees in equal numbers.

These committees were originally concerned exclusively with the pedagogic aspects of continuing training. Their role was subsequently extended to include some aspects of the management of funds contributed by firms.

The functions of the further training committee have traditionally included prospects for the opening and closing of branches, the organisation of training and the drawing up of programmes; it also lays down the general conditions for the admission of young people and for the training of instructors and ensures that the guidelines drawn up for these different areas are properly applied.

With the amendment of 31 September 1982, the further training committee became involved in financial management. Since this time they have had responsibility for deciding the conditions for

the use of mutualised funds, i.e. contributions paid by firms that remain unused; moreover, they have to be conversant with the total budget of the ASFO as far as its training activities are concerned.

The amendment to the 1970 agreement that was signed on 19 September 1984 took this development a stage further: since this date, the further training committee has administered the funds paid by firms for the financing of alternating training.

2.1.3. The funds for individual training leave (the Fongécifs)

The ASFOs do not administer individual training leave. Rather it is the Fongécifs which deal with the applications for personal training leave made by employees in the metal industry.

The Fongécifs are joint intersectoral bodies set up at regional level; employers and employees have equal representation. In some regions with a high concentration of metal firms, there is also, within the Fongécif, a joint section for the metal industry, which deals with applications made by employees in the metal industry.

2.1.4. CPCs in the metal industry

There is one CPC for the metal industry attached to the Ministry of Education. Its functions include the formulation and planning of initial training, the analysis of needs and the preparation of new training programmes, both in terms of content and final diplomas.

The CPC is made up of three colleges, each with ten members: one comprises representatives of the public authorities, another representatives of the employers' federations and the third representatives of the employees' federations in the metal industry.

The UIMM has a representative on the permanent group of the intersectoral consultative committee, which is a forum for political dialogue to which the government submits new proposals on matters relating to initial training. In principle, it is representatives of the confederations who have seats on this body.

There is also a CPC for the metal industry attached to the Ministry of Labour which is responsible to the AFPA for continuing training in the same way as the CPC attached to the Ministry of Education.

2.2. The training organisations

In addition to administering the funds for continuing training, the ASFOs are also training organisations.

The apprenticeship is traditionally one of the methods favoured in the metal industry for training young people in the crafts of the industry. Apprentices are trained in the CFAs set up for the industry in all departments. These CFAs are administered by associations established by metal industry employers' federation affiliated to the UIMM. Only the employers are represented on the board of management of these associations. On the other hand, each CFA has a joint further training committee on which employers and employees have equal representaion, together with representatives of the Ministry of Education.

3. Sectoral and other agreements

Only in exceptional cases is vocational training the subject of collective negotiation at sector level in the metal industry. Some large firms have concluded their own company agreements on vocational training. The IUMM and the government have signed a commitment to develop training.

3.1. Collective bargaining at sector level

Although sector-level negotiation takes place in other areas (e.g. on wages and working hours), vocational training appears to be virtually excluded from the sphere of collective bargaining. The only agreement that has been reached at this level, the agreement of 22 January 1985 on the aims and instruments of training in the metal industry, was signed in pursuance of the obligation to negotiate introduced by the law of 24 February 1984.

Examination of the content of the agreement, which made absolutely no change to the general system of continuing training, may well lead to the suspicion that there was no real desire on the part of the IUMM to negotiate on vocational training, and that their real aim was to avoid a situation in which firms in the metal industry would be forced to negotiate; the employers' organisation, while accepting the obligation introduced by the legislature, safeguarded its basic principle that vocational training should remain the exclusive responsibility of the employer.

The agreement of 22 January 1985 on the aims and instruments of vocational training contains no radical changes. As far as the aims and instruments of continuing training are concerned, the agreement retains the existing general arrangements. The only difference from the existing system is in the end results of

continuing training which arise directly out of the current situation of firms: "the changes, particularly technological changes, that firms in the metal industry now face are part of an unstable economic environment, characterised by increasingly strong international competition. In this context, and in view of the rise in unemployment, the parties to the agreement consider that increased efficiency in firms is one of the essential conditions for growth in the economy and in employment.

Achievement of this aim obviously requires significant capital investment, but such investment will not be fully effective unless accompanied by the more efficient utilisation of human resources that is essential to improving firms' ability to adapt and innovate.

Vocational training is one of the most important means of achieving this end. It must enable employees to acquire the knowledge and skills required in their job and it must increase their adaptability as well further their professional development and mobility. Training will thus bring about the necessary convergence between economic needs and individual aspirations."

3.2. Collective bargaining at firm level

We have examined an agreement concluded on 27 April 1986 between the management of the SACILOR group and the CFDT, CFTC, CGC and CGT-FO. The SACILOR group employes 65,000 people in about 150 companies. The agreement in question is an outline agreement applicable to all companies in the group.

After a preamble that describes training as "a major instrument in maximising the human potential of the company" and as "a real investment", the agreement is divided into two parts, one on the role of training in the company, the other on the main lines of development.

- The role of training in company strategy

The first phase of training consists of a wide-ranging inquiry into the company and its training policy. The development of consultation is intended to create "a contractual community capable of mobilising initiatives, energies and talents to the maximum".

The procedure leading to the implementation of the training programme begins with an evaluation of training needs in both quantitative and qualitative terms and in terms of individual management of employment, followed by an evaluation of the training programmes carried out and analysis of the training paths of each individual worker.

- The main lines of development: training is incorporated in to company strategy and is reflected in the formulation of long-term training plans organised around three guiding principles: participation of the work force, mastery of technologies and improvement in skill levels. The agreement lays stress on the "priority instruments": the necessity of carrying out initial research in order to determine the training and re-training programmes required before any investment is made; the establishment of individual training credit with a minimum duration of one week per year; training based on credit units in order to encourage social advancement; regular annual interview for each worker with immediate superior; establishment of a joint "follow-up committee" responsible for analysing results and making any necessary changes.

3.3. Training development agreements

Training development agreements have been signed between central government and the UIMM which cover the metal industry as a whole, certain sectors and even, in some cases, individual firms.

3.3.1. The vocational training development agreement in UIMM firms

This agreement was signed on 5 March 1986 between central government and the UIMM. Under the terms of the agreement, central government undertakes to contribute towards the financing "of training programmes intended to facilitate the development and modernisation of production and management processes in firms in the various sectors falling within the scope of the UIMM". These programmes "are those which prepare the way for the development of skills and jobs, particularly in the following priority areas:

- production: NC machine tools and flexible, automated and robotic units and CAD/CAM;
- use of new materials;
- production management, computerised production management, computerised administration and integrated quality control;
- international sales and trade.

These programmes may include the updating of general training as well as an introduction to the technologies and their context in the areas in question".

3.3.2. A sector-level agreement: the training development agreement concluded between central government and the pump makers' association

This is a sector with a small number of firms. A total of 85 companies employ 7,000 people; they are mostly medium-sized firms (80% of the employers employ fewer than 80 people), but they occupy a strategic position in French industry: the firms in this sector export 60% of their production and rank fifth in the world.

The firms in the sector are having to deal with technological changes: in the very short term, they will have to incorporate into their products the potential offered by micro-processors and automate their production processes.

The agreement provides for the planned expansion of training, with an increase in expenditure on training to 3% of the wages bill for the sector as a whole; when the agreement was signed, most of the firms in the sector were spending between 1 and 1.6% of their wages bill.

In order to ensure that the training programme is expanded, the trade association will have to play an active role by offering advice to firms.

3.3.3. A training development agreement concluded between central government and a firm

The firm in question is a small precision engineering company which has decided to embark on a programme of investment in machine tools and machining centres. Twenty of the thirty employees who work on conventional machines will have to be retrained as workshop technicians on NC machines. The training of these workers is planned to take place over several years, in accordance with the implementation of the investment programme. In order to get this plan under way the firm has to agree to an extensive training programme, involving expenditure of 12% of the wages bill. The state aid that will be provided under the terms of this agreement will enable the firm to embark on this programme under satisfactory conditions.

4. The functioning of the sectoral training system

The UIMM has complete control of the implementation of vocational training in the metal industry, with the exception of individual training leave, which is administered by the Fongécifs. Moreover, training is a very important issue in the UIMM's social strategy. As a UIMM representative put it: "vocational training, to which the industry attaches great importance, is given top priority in the UIMM's social policy".

Under these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that the trade union organisations consider that the few concessions made to worker participation by employers in the industry in pursuance of legislation or a national intersectoral agreement are virtually meaningless.

1/ It is the UIMM which controls the implementation of training. Training policy for the entire industry falling within the jurisdiction of the UIMM is determined by the training committee of the UIMM, which has made available the means of implementing that policy, particularly through the establishment of a network of CFAs and ASFOs.

The fact that it was the UIMM that took the initiative in establishing its own apprenticeship certificate illustrates the control that the employers' organisation exerts over vocational training.

2/ As for the few joint bodies set up by national intersectoral agreements or legislation, the opinion of trade union representatives is that they do not fulfil the role given to them.

Thus, according to the union representatives, the CNPE for the metal industry, which meets twice a year, neither formulates nor follows up policy. It is simply a forum for the distribution and summarising of information already in the public domain. Moreover, the only interesting information relates to the outline agreements concluded with the government on employment and priority programmes on which the trade unions were not consulted.

The joint committees on employment set up at regional level no longer meet.

Moreover, in the view of the unions, it is in fact a distortion of the truth to say that there is "equal" representation on these committees, since "each of the five union organisations has only two representatives", compared with the ten representatives of the UIMM.

Again according to the unions, the further training committees do not function in accordance with the spirit of the agreements. The representatives who sit on these committees have little information on the actual functioning of the system; they are given only general information on the collection and allocation of funds. Moreover, they function very inefficiently and very often have only a limited degree of joint management, since it is often the case that the only one or two trade unions are represented.

As far as the agreement of 22 January 1985 on the aims and instruments of continuing training is concerned, the UIMM

considers that it allowed debate on general policy orientation and that the agreement provides a basis for progress. However, the CGT, which refused to sign the agreement, considers that the agreement was drawn up by the UIMM and that negotiations were conducted on the basis of the demands made by the UIMM.

CHAPTER III - VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN THE BANKING INDUSTRY

The total work force in the banking sector in France is of the order of 450,000. The distribution of the work force in 1981 was as follows: 246,000 in the so-called "registered" banks affiliated to the AFB (Association Française de Banque, or the French Banking Association), 110,000 in the cooperative and mutualist banks (Crédit Populaire, Crédit Agricole, Crédit Mutuel) and 90,500 in the Treasury network (Savings Banks and Post Office financial services).

The banking sector is highly concentrated with a majority of large nationalised companies. Recruitment has been high and great importance has traditionally been attached to continuing training. The banks affiliated to the AFB devote about 4% of their total wages bill to this type of training.

There is no apprenticeship system in the banking sector. The Ministry of Education has for a long time played no part in the basic vocational training, which is provided by the intersectoral organisations which had a monopoly of such training within the framework of the state diplomas laid down by the Ministry of Education. Continuing training financed by the banks is also dominated, although to a lesser extent, by the inter-bank training structures. The large banks carry out more of their own training than the others. In fact, within the AFB sector, there is a virtual absence of training structures such as the ASFOs and the FAFs; training is carried out for the most part by the CFPF (Centre de formation de la Profession Bancaire, or Banking Training Centre) and through correspondence courses.

Personal training leave in the banking sector is organised through FONGECIF. In this area, therefore, the banks make use of a joint intersectoral body organised on a regional basis. The industry has not yet signed the commitment to develop vocational training with the Ministry of Vocational Training.

The role of vocational training in the banks affiliated to the AFB is very closely linked to collective agreements as well as to sector or firm-level agreements. Training is regulated by a complex system comprising, on the one hand, the enterprise committees associated with trade union branches and, on the other, regional and national joint committees; the latter committee is the highest consultative and negotiating body. The final element in the system is the joint consultative committee attached to the Ministry of Education, which is responsible for

the definition of all aspects of institutionalised training. After examining the basic elements of joint management in vocational training in the banking sector and the role of the CFTB in the functioning of the training system, we shall discuss the sector-level agreements that have been concluded and then give several examples of the tensions that may exist between unions and management within the consultative and negotiation bodies. This chapter on the banking sector will conclude with examination of the prospects opened up in this area by the employers through the AFB.

1. The basic elements of joint management: collective agreements and the joint sector committees

The collective labour agreement for the banking sector, which dates from 1948 and which was last updated in June 1985, defines the role of vocational training in the banking sector and the joint negotiating bodies.

As far as vocational training itself is concerned, the agreement lays down the conditions of access to training programmes and of remuneration for the qualifications acquired. It states that vocational training courses shall be organised by the banks during working hours, on a local basis or, failing that, by correspondance and that trainees shall be paid during their period of training. It also states that all entrants to the profession shall be obliged to follow these courses unless they already possess the required vocational diplomas and that, conversely, the banks shall be obliged, after consultation with enterprise committees or staff delegates, to facilitate access to these training courses for all employees under 30 or with less than 5 years' seniority. Finally, it provides for "advances in seniority for the holders of various general and vocational diplomas, thus giving them salary increases".

The collective agreement also defines the main regulatory bodies for the sector. Priority is given to the sectoral CRPs (commissions régionales paritaires, or joint regional committees) which must exist at the headquarters of each local bank committee in accordance with a list laid down by the signatories to the agreement. These committees have 10 members, five representatives of the employers and five representatives of the union organisations, one for each of the organisations represented at national level. The chairmanship alternates between employers' and employees' representatives. In general, their role is to carry out prior examination of all questions of concern to firms in the area relating to the application of the collective agreement and having no general repercussions. As a joint committee for vocational training, it supervises the application, within the framework of the existing institutes, of the legal obligations relating to vocational training, passes on its wishes and proposals in this area to the national joint

committee and implements the decisions taken by this latter committee. In all cases, the CRPs can call upon the services of the CNP.

The CNP (Commission Nationale Paritaire, or National Joint Committee) has 30 members appointed on an annual basis, 15 representatives of the employers and 15 representatives of the five trade union organisations that are signatories to the collective agreement. Its role is to examine all general questions falling within the scope of the collective agreement, particularly the examination and implementation of all legislation. As far as vocational training is concerned, it is responsible for coordinating the implementation of legislation in this area, studies the proposals in this area referred to it and comments, if necessary, on their application; it examines the difficulties relating to the implementation of training that could not be resolved with the union delegates, either at firm level or that of the CRPs. In the event of disagreement, the parties may have recourse to arbitration. The agreements reached are notified to the banks through the AFB with the approval of its board. The National Joint Committee meets at least once a quarter. It may set up sub-committees to assist it, such as the National Joint Committee on Employment which plays an important role in the area of vocational training by preparing all the relevant files for the CNP.

2. A favoured instrument in bank training: the training centre for the banking profession (CFPB)

2.1. Training institutions controlled by the profession

The CFPB is the key institution in the vocational training system of the banking industry. Entirely financed by the banks, it accounts for about half of their expenditure on training. The centre was set up by the AFB in 1972. It has its origin in the Association for the Development of Technical Education in Banking set up in 1932, which in 1962 became the Centre for Technical Education in Banking (CETB). The CFPB provides so-called "institutional" training programmes (CAP; BP) corresponding to basic diplomas recognised by the state: 53% of the resources come from providing the first category of training and 25% from the second. Collection of the apprenticeship tax accounts for only 5% of resources, while the remaining 18% come from various other sources.

The importance of the institutional training programmes is due to the fact that, historically, the banking industry has considered that basic vocational training should be the responsibility of the industry and not of the Ministry of Education, which did not establish the first CAP in banking until 1974. In 1972, the CETB became the CFPB, which reflected the desire of the industry to safeguard its presence in the framework

of the law of 1971 on continuing training.

The general training system in the banking system is completed by the ITB (Institute Technique de Banque, or Technical Institute of Banking). Set up by government decree in 1950 as part of the Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers (CNAM, a college of higher technology for training of students in the application of science to industry), the ITB is administered by the CFPB. The Institute provides higher education leading to the award of a degree-level diploma recognised by the state. Finally, there is a centre for Higher Education in Banking (centre d'Etudes Supérieurs de Banque, of ESB), which is under the supervision of the AFB and administered in association with the Political Sciences Foundation. The centre has been established since 1942 and also provides higher education which is not, however, recognised by the state.

2.2. The training programmes and the origin of trainees: inter-firm training programmes for the benefit of medium-sized firms.

Basic institutionalised vocational training, although still important, is in steep decline, particularly as far as the CAP is concerned, registrations for which fell in 10 years from 40,000 in 1974 to 24,000 in 1982/1983. This trend, which has since stabilised, is due basically to a reduction in hirings and the raising of the base level for recruitment, which is now established at baccalauréat level. On the other hand, higher education courses provided by the ITB saw a rise in the number of registrations from 4,000 in 1975/76 to 4,800 in 1984/85, i.e. a 21% increase over 10 years.

Continuing vocational training, in contrast to the above training programmes, is considered by the banks, and particularly the largest ones, as falling within their own province rather than that of the interprofessional organisations. In 1983/84, the CFPB provided 8,300 days of training for 26,000 trainees, who followed courses lasting on average 3 days. The courses were thus particularly short. They are tending to increase, with the numbers taking part having increased by 17% between 1982/1983 and 1983/1984.

The CFPB also provides training for trainees working in banks not affiliated to the AFB. Twelve per cent of those registered on basic institutional training courses come from other networks; the corresponding figure for continuing training is 40%. It should be pointed out that employees of the six largest banks account for only 7% of registrations, whereas the six banks in question employ 2/3 of all employees in banks affiliated to the AFB. The reason for this is that the large banks have their own training departments and a permanent staff of trainers, while the small and medium-sized banks tend to sub-contract their training programmes. In fact almost 3/4 of the big banks' training

programmes are provided by their in-house training departments, or, put another way, half of their institutional training programmes and 88% of their continuing training.

On average, each bank employee undergoes one week of training, although the participation rates for managerial staff are lower because of the importance attached to institutional training.

2.3. The decision-making bodies: joint consultation but not decision-making

The CFBP is adminstered by a director general appointed by the AFB and a board of management which is the decision-making body. Until 1986, all the members of the board were employers' representatives. There is also a joint further training committee which is consulted on the orientation of the CFPB. In formal terms, therefore, the CFPB has the same structure as an ASFO, since there is no joint management and since it both collects funds and provides training. However, since March 1986, the AFB has offered seats on the board of management to the five main trade union organisations that are signatories to the collective agreement, although this has not led to equal representation.

3. Sector-level agreements predominate over those at firm level

The banking industry under the aegis of the AFB has signed two major agreements on vocational training. The first of these was signed on 20 February 1985 in pursuance of the law of February 1984 on continuing training, while the second agreement, on technological change, was signed on 16 May 1986.

3.1 The sector-level agreement of 20 February 1985 specifies five main areas for implementation of the law

a/ The nature of training programmes and their order of priority are redefined in order to facilitate preparation for the changes in progress, to develop professionalism and to fit in with the policy of internal promotion. Other objectives include improvement of the services offered by the banking industry, ensuring that training plans stress the acquisition of methods and tools for identifying, analysing and resolving problems, retention of the important role played within the training systems by banking training: CAP, BP, ITB, CESB and giving greater publicity within banking organisations to personal training leave.

b/ Recognition of the qualifications acquired from training programmes is increased by awarding holders of qualifications from the ITB the advances in seniority awarded under the collective agreement to holders of diplomas of general and

technical education, by giving trainees certificates even for training courses not formally recognised by the state and by requesting that management should as far as possible allocate new functions, which would enable those obtaining qualifications to enter classification systems.

c/ The assistance available to union delegates, members of works or enterprise committees and members of training committees in fulfilling their functions with respect to training is strengthened in two different ways, depending on the size of firm. In companies with more than 200 employees, a training committee is set up which prepares for the two annual meetings of the enterprise committee at which training is discussed. This training committee undertakes the necessary studies and informs employees of the opportunities for training in order to encourage to make known their own training needs. The two meetings of the enterprise committee must be preceded by two meetings of the training committee each lasting 3 hours. In companies with fewer than 200 employees and in which there is an enterprise committee, the members of the committee are given 3 hours' preparation time before the two meetings mentioned above.

d/ The conditions for the integration of young people into companies within the framework of alternating training are specified. The banking profession wishes to participate in this programme by stressing the adaptation contracts and wants the corresponding training programmes to be carried out within the framework of the CFPB. It states that, in the case of two potential recruits with the same profile, priority will be given to young people having followed such courses and payment will be made in full and retrospectively from the time at which their training started. It is the job of the CRPs to inform banks of the presence of the young people becoming available at the end of the adaptation contracts, while at the end of each year the employers' delegation informs the CNP of the conditions for the integration of young people into the industry under these various contracts.

e/ Finally, the agreement states that it shall be valid for five years; that it may be subject to amendment if necessary, signed by the CNPE, which also has responsibility for ensuring that the agreement is applied.

3.2. The framework agreement on technological change of 16 May 1986

The purpose of this agreement, which is the result of joint discussions on the diffusion of new technologies in the banks, is to lay down the main rules that apply and to agree the appropriate measures to be taken. The CGT refused to sign it because they considered it did not say enough about training and

nothing at all about changing job classifications. The agreement stresses the need to incorporate the concerns arising out of technological change into banks' training plans. Training must be an important instrument in the process of adaptation and the improvement of skill levels. It institutes prior consultation at firm level with staff representative organisations, in order to give them an opportunity to express their views and suggestions on anticipated changes, both quantitative and qualitative, in conditions of employment. The consultation must be carried out in a precise way, i.e. in writing, after planning but before implementation of the decision. The agreement must be followed up by the CNP.

3.3. Company agreements

There have been no company agreements within the framework of the sector agreements of February 1985, but apart from these sector-level agreements, company agreements on vocational training have been signed. We have examined two which show the diversity of the field:

- the aim of the agreement of 20 December 1985 concluded at the Crédit Industriel de Normandie within the framework of the "Plan for professional equality" is the gradual introduction of equality of opportunity in their career paths for men and women. Under the terms of the agreement, staff delegates were empowered to refer this type of discrimination to the social affairs department of the company. The agreement was not signed by the CFDT which, in a minority in the firm, considered that the objectives were not laid down precisely enough and that, conversely, promotion paths were determined too precisely, which might lead women into "veritable obstacle courses".

- The agreement of 17 April 1986 concluded at the Crédit Populaire on "working conditions for VDU operators" includes a provision on training which encourages general knowledge of the data processing system and offers an introductory course on information technology to the staff allocated to such jobs and more advanced training in ergonomics for technicians responsible for selecting equipment. The agreement will be followed up on an annual basis by the enterprise committee, which will assess the use of the equipment and medical developments in the relevant areas.

4. The tensions between actors in the functioning of the various joint bodies

Two examples can be used to illustrate these tensions: the functioning of CPC no. 18 attached to the Ministry of Education when a BEP is being planned, and the functioning of a Joint Regional Committee with respect to reform of the BP.

4.1. CPC 18 and the planning of a BEP for the "insurance, banking and stockbroking" sectors

The idea of setting up a BEP of this kind arose from collective discussions within the CPC following an experimental CAP taught in two years after the third form of two vocational education schools. In fact the high failure rates for the CAP in banking showed that basic attainment at level V was too low for this type of training. The representatives of the sectors in question wanted the scheme to be generalised, but the Ministry of Education replied that the CAP should be changed into a BEP.

The CFPB followed the preparation of the proposal (programme, timetables, examination coefficient) and the employers declared themselves in favour of the proposal in 1972 and 1974 within the CPC working party. However, in April 1976, a BEP was set up on a majority vote without the employers' assent. Their refusal to be associated with the final project arose out of a disagreement on job definition and the corresponding monograph and on the linking of the BEP to the BP. In fact, the monograph drawn up by the AFB did not grant holders of the BEP rapid access to skilled jobs, whereas in the eyes of the Ministry of Education, this access was the justification for the very existence of the BEP. Moreover, the government was of the opinion that the BEP should under normal circumstances lead towards the BP, whereas the AFB wished to see a division between the two qualifications and to restrict access to the BP to those having already passed the baccalauréat.

The BEP was eventually set up, but the industry largely ignored it, which more or less killed it off, thus showing the complete domination by the industry of basic vocational training.

The situation arose from the absolute rejection by the profession of anything that might result in the linking of basic vocational training with job classification levels at the time of recruitment, from the realisation from that time onwards that the BEP was no longer relevant to employment in the profession as a result of the changes that had taken place and from the desire to make the baccalauréat the basic level of attainment for recruitment, although this was never openly stated.

As far as the state-recognised vocational diplomas are concerned, there is a certain degree of redundancy among the bodies involved. The task of defining diplomas is tackled by the

CPCNs, by the further training and management committees of the CFPB, by the CNPE and the CNP. This multiplicity of official bodies, considered by some to be unwieldy, nevertheless gives the negotiating process a certain degree of flexibility. Thus negotiations on the development of the BP were carried out in the CNPE after an impasse had been reached in the CPC on the questions of syllabus, methods of implementation and minimum timetables.

4.2. A joint regional committee

The debates that accompanied the presentation by a representative of the CFPB of the training programmes implemented by that body in response to the reform of the BP implemented in 1985 also reveal fairly clearly the tensions that can exist between the two sides of industry on matters of vocational training.

One area of tension is the distribution of information between the two sides. The trade union representatives once again put forward their view that the CRP (joint regional committee) should be involved with vocational training, its implementation and the application within banks of agreements relating to training and demanded that training plans should be examined in conjunction with the enterprise committees in order to facilitate communications between the CRP and the CFPB. They expressed the wish that the trade union organisations should be informed, via the CRP, of all training opportunities and that, in addition, they should be able to intervene, make proposals and communicate with the CFPB in the same way as the employers in the banking sector. The union representatives were thus of the opinion that there was a certain degree of dissymmetry between the two sides of the industry. In particular, the CGT demanded detailed information, both technical and financial, on the programmes conducted. The representative of the CFPB gave a favourable response to these demands, to the extent that they related to information available to him and that he normally made available, while the employers' representatives were of the view that the information was already available in the enterprise committees, which would make them available to employee representatives if requested to do so.

A second source of tension was the content of training programmes. The trade union representatives felt that some instructors were not sufficiently competent and regretted the absence of new training programmes, particularly in the area of information technology.

A third area of tension was the proliferation of training courses, which was considered by the CGT-FO to be detrimental to the extent that the courses were too theoretical and carried too much weight in the promotion system, while the CGT demanded that

the BP be recognised and that this recognition be reflected in the salary structure.

Finally the CGT-FO demanded joint management for the CFPB in place of the mere presence of unions representatives on the board of management and the limited degree of employee participation on the further training committee. In fact, the criticisms levelled by the CGT, which were the most systematic of those made by the unions, could be summarised as follows:

- lack of real negotiation, but rather attempts to reach agreement on the basis of the proposals put forward by the employers;
- real information forthcoming, but inequality in the distribution of information, particularly in relation to the studies of future needs conducted by the management of banks;
- no real desire for dialogue beyond the statutory requirements;
- training programmes determined from the employers' point of view, in accordance with a logic that is "elitist, narrow, short-term and, moreover, costly".

Thus according to the CGT, there is no joint management or even partnership, the relationship between unions and management being based essentially on the "balance of power" between the two sides.

4.3. Formulation of a training plan

Although the notion of a "company training plan" began to emerge in the 1976/77, it was not until 1985 that a major nationalised bank drew up its first "General training plan". This was actually part of earlier training programmes conducted by the bank, but it marked a new departure, both in terms of the training programmes envisaged and of the underlying objectives.

These latter included greater consistency between company policies and the objectives of training programmes, more precise determination of priorities, strengthening of the roles of the relevant management personnel in the diffusion of information, direct participation by employees in defining their own training and the development of consultation between unions and management.

The organigram below shows the the role of this process of consultation throughout the formulation of the training plan. It shows that, with the establishment of the joint working party on training, this dialogue goes significantly further than the requirements of the legislation, since the representatives of the employees' organisations are effectively given an opportunity to influence the content of the plan. It is still the case, however, that the all the initial phases in the formulation of the plan (the first three phases) are the sole responsibility of management, which led a union like the CGT to say that there is

no real opportunity for employees to participate in the formulation of training plans, and that their influence is restricted to "amending" the guidelines laid down by management.

A nationalised bank

PROCEDURE FOR FORMULATION OF GENERAL TRAINING PLAN

February	-	meeting of Committe on the general orientation of training (phase 1)
	-	proposal for updating of plan
March		
April	-	Preparation of draft plan by personnel management
May		department (phase 2)
June	-	Draft plan studied by Committee on general orientation of training (phase 3)
July	-	Distribution of draft plan (phase 4): . to chairmen of the enterprise committee . to the joint working parties on training . to the central enterprise committee
September	-	Concurrently: . comments on general training plan to training committee of enterprise committee . consultation prior to formulation of local training plan (phase 5a) . examination of draft plan by joint working party on training (phase 5b)
October	-	Concurrently: . formulation of local training plans by chairmen of enterprise committees (phase 6a) . examination of draft plan by central enterprise committee (phase 6b), with a view to approval
November	-	Examination of local training plans by enterprise committees (phase 7), with a view to approval
December	-	Examination by joint working party on training of local training plans not approved (phase 8): . summary of difficulties encountered . preparation of memo to borad of management
January (following year)	-	meeting of board of management (phase 9) to examine: . the summary or difficulties encountered in obtaining approval of local training plans . the general training plan and the view of the central enterprise committee

5. The prospects for future developments at sector level, as envisaged by the AFB: increased emphasis on continuing training and strengthening of the role of the various actors in banking companies in the system of guidance.

As a result of the changes being experienced by the banking sector, both those arising out of changes in business conditions and those arising out of the conditions of management associated with a new generation of information technology, the banks are tending to modify their staffing structure. Although they are now recruiting at an increasingly high level, they find themselves with a lot of staff between the ages of 30 and 45, many of whom were recruited at a low level of general training and who now have to receive both general and job-specific training within the framework of the continuing training system.

The vocational training system in the banking sector thus finds itself facing a new situation requiring the implementation of major changes. In particular, there will have to be closer collaboration between the training system and the management of the banks in order to identify more precisely the "jobs of the future", while at the same time the aspirations of the individuals concerned will still have to be taken into account. It is in this spirit that the AFB initiated a series of discussions leading to the determination of a certain number of objectives (2).

5.1. Changes in the guidance system

The board of management of the AFB will involve itself more in vocational training by examining at least once a year developments in that area (policies embarked on, training needs to be fulfilled, resources implemented). It will nominate the CFPB administrators representing the bank by selecting managerial staff to work alongside the staff in charge of social affairs and training and will nominate the director-general of the CFPB.

The orientation of training will be determined by the social affairs committee of the AFB which was established in 1983 and which will itself be dependent on the social affairs department of the AFB whose resources with respect to training will be increased.

The CFPB will encourage greater participation from its members and seek greater involvement in its administration from both unions and management.

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2) Association française de Banque: "Rapport sur la formation professionnelle", 17 September 1985, 46 pages.

5.2. Encouraging all banking companies to develop the way in which they implement training, which must be totally integrated into forward planning; directors and middle management will also have to be heavily involved in the formulation and implementation of training plans.

Training activities will have to be undertaken in such a way as to develop individual capacity for adaptation and mobility as well as to facilitate retraining.

The training of middle managers will be substantially increased.

5.3. Adapting training to new needs

In view of the changes in its basic recruitment level, the AFB wishes to reduce its general teaching functions in order to concentrate on vocational training programmes.

As far as institutionalised training programmes with the Ministry of Education are concerned, while the AFB is considering requesting the establishment of a BTS (brevet de technicien supérieur, or higher technician's certificate) in economics and finance, which would not be restricted to banking and which would make it possible to raise recruitment levels, it will soon be experiencing a reversal of the traditional roles; the profession, both unions and management, will be defining the training required by the banking sector, even if responsibility for training is subsequently handed over to the Ministry of Education, which could call on both its own instructors and professionals from the banking industry, for example within the framework of agreements between schools and banks. In addition, the AFB would like the nature and methods of teaching to be revised in such as a way as to reduce the amount of formal knowledge taught and to put the emphasis on "reflex thinking" for the solving of practical problems and the acquisition of appropriate responses; in this respect, the AFB is following the same path as the trade unions.

As far as continuing training is concerned, some of the training programmes that play a leading role in the CFPB are considered too short and of insufficient depth; longer courses should be developed in order to fulfil the common needs of the whole of the banking sector (behavioural training, training of trainers, specific technical training...). Differentiated training programmes should be set up within the framework of the banking "professions" identified as those of the future, and modular preparatory courses for the ITB intermediate diploma

should be developed in order to reduce the current failure rate ([3]). Finally, the AFB is considering setting up, possibly with the collaboration of the CESB and the CFPB or an organisation outside the banking sector, a permanent, high-level training scheme of the management type, for the benefit of senior executives.

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[3] Except for the CESB, for which there is rigorous initial selection, the failure rates on banking training courses are high; only 8% of those registered with the ITB obtain their diploma. The same is true for the BP, while failure rates for the CAP are over 60%.

PART THREE

THE FUNCTIONING OF THE BODIES AND THEIR DYNAMICS: ISSUES AND PERSPECTIVES

In the first two parts we described the general structure of the French system of vocational training, the composition of the various bodies and their role in regulating the system. The examples of individual sectors showed that, within a general framework that is already very complex, the conditions under which the system is implemented and functions can be very different; this makes any attempt to describe the system as a whole on the basis of limited parameters an extremely difficult exercise.

Although we would not claim to be engaged on such an exercise, it is none the less necessary to return to a more general approach in order to disentangle the issues which become entwined or are likely to become entwined around the general structure of the vocational training system and the roles of unions and management in this structure. A dual approach can be taken to these questions.

In the first instance, we can continue to consider the system as it currently is and pursue our investigations into its functionings in such a way as to assess performance, both with respect to the production of skills and the operation of labour market (i.e. in terms of services supplied) and with respect to the functioning of the various bodies (i.e. in terms of its organisation). It is only by this somewhat tortuous route that it will be possible to assess the actual roles of unions and management in the system and the value of these roles.

Secondly, however, by returning to the dynamics of the system, and more particularly to the prospects for more radical changes in its structure, in view of more general prospects such as the possibility of disengagement on the part of the state, greater decentralisation or an increase in the room for manoeuvre enjoyed by company managers, we can attempt to identify the issues which, in view of these developments, are of particular concern to unions and management, taking into account their representation at the various levels of the regulatory system.

CHAPTER 1 - THE PERFORMANCE OF THE FRENCH SYSTEM OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND THE QUALITIES OF ITS GUIDANCE SYSTEM

Before we can claim to be in a position to pass judgement on the effectiveness of a vocational training system, we must have some idea of is expected of it and of the qualities deemed necessary in the guidance system.

1. The limited performance of the French system of vocational training

The role of unions and management in vocational training can be assessed on the basis of their ability to intervene in a meaningful way in the dynamics of training. It can be assessed from two points of view: in the medium-term, an evaluation can be based on the ability of the system to supply the skills required by economic and social growth; in the short-term, the evaluation is based rather on the functioning of the labour market. The purpose of the latter assessment is the regulation of labour flows, either between employment and unemployment, or by remaining in employment in such a way as to limit periods of unemployment due to inadequate or inappropriate skills relative to the needs of firms.

From both points of view, vocational training must ensure equality of opportunity, giving each individual access to training ccurse in accordance with their abilities and wishes and not with obstacles associated with their position in the social and economic system. This immediately raises questions about the quality of the training supplied, the number of places available and the accessibility of training courses (number and nature of trainees). If the French system of vocational training is examined on the basis of these criteria, what conclusions can be reached?

The initial training system still leaves 23% of any one age cohort without any vocational training, which is a large percentage, even though the situation has significantly improved in the last ten years. To be more exact, of an age cohort of 786,000 young people, 189,000 left the vocational training system in 1982 without any qualification; this reflects the high failure and drop-out rates that still persist in France.

EXIT FLOWS FROM THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

	1973	1982
Total 100%	776,000	786,000
Level VI (no vocational training)	119,500 (16%)	100,400 (13%)
Level Va (exit before level V diploma)	139,000 (18%)	82,400 (10%)
Level V (CAP and BEP)	258,200 (33%)	283,000 (36%)

The results are not so bad if apprenticeships are taken into account, since the exit rates for 1982 fell from 13 to 5% at level VI and from 10 to 7% at level Va, while they increased at level V from 36 to 48%. Unemployment rates for young people without vocational training qualifications are very high; in March 1984, they reached 59% for boys and 63% for girls, excluding apprenticeships (1). It is thus not difficult to understand the concern of the public authorities in recent years with implementing various plans aimed at facilitating the employment of young people, with a view to limiting the damage. In its latest version, this plan, described as "alternating training", would appear since its launch in May 1985 to have involved 838,000 young people, including 102,000 apprenticeships and, in December 1986, 119,000 young people, including 19,500 apprenticeships.

In fact, of the three types of basic contracts which make up the plan (apprenticeships are not included), the "qualification contracts", which most closely resemble apprenticeships, account for only 4,111 young people from this latter total, whereas the "adaptation contracts", which are aimed at young people leaving the system at level V and are intended to allow them to complete their training through work experience, accounted for 31,340 and the work experience courses (SIVP, or stages d'initiation à la vie professionnelle), which last for less than 3 months, accounted for a further 21,100. Even taking into account this massive and costly compensatory exercise, and without wishing to deny its undoubted benefits, the system as a whole can hardly be regarded as satisfactory.

For its part, the training system set up in pursuance of the law of July 1971 had financial resources of 16 billion francs in 1983, i.e. 2.3% of the total wages bill of the firms subject to the law, with wide differences in expenditure according to type of firm and sector of economic activity. Thus in the same year, firms with between 10 and 50 employees spent 1.1% of their wages bill on continuing training, compared with 1.64% for firms with

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[1] According to F. AMAT, Emploi des jeunes et politique de lutte contre le chômage: le cas de la France entre 1973 et 1985. CEREQ, Paris, Working Paper no. 22, March 1986, 97 p.

between 50 and 2,000 employees and 3.21% for those with more than 2,000. Similarly, the differences in expenditure between sectors ranged between 1.1 and 5.9%. The average duration of the corresponding courses was low, since the maximum was only 50 hours, while the proportion of those benefitting from training according to occupational categories also varied widely: 1 in 3 for managerial staff, 1 in 4 for supervisory and technicians, 1 in 6 for skilled workers and 1 in 12 for unskilled manual and clerical workers (2). Thus the marked inequality of access to initial vocational training is not diminished in the system of continuous vocational training. Moreover, it is becoming increasingly evident that, in the current economic situation, the funds provided by firms are inadequate and should be increased to around 3% of total wages bill if they are to meet current needs.

To complete the picture, the results of the retraining programmes implemented at sector level or by company agreements should be included.

In fact, as far as the employee representatives are concerned, the important thing is that young people who find themselves in the system should not be used as cheap labour, but should receive effective training leading whenever possible to a recognised qualification; moreover, in addition to their training in the firm, they should be given the benefit, as far as possible, of a stable job corresponding to the training received (3). Similarly, for employees not threatened by redundancy, the problem is to ensure that training and career development plans exist which enable all employees within a firm capable of so doing to acquire new skills in order to be able to adapt to change and to benefit from career development. Finally, for employees under threat of redundancy, the problem is to obtain training plans that will guarantee proper retraining and lead to actual reclassifications linked to as long a delay as possible in the severing of the employment relationship with the initial employer.

In the current situation, in which jobs are scarce and the skills acquired by people in work are undergoing major changes, it is clear that the fundamental issue at stake in the eyes of those representing employees is to ensure that firms or public

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2) See J.L. DAYAN, J.P. GEHIN, E. VERDIER, La formation continue dans l'industrie, in Formation-Emploi, "La formation continue et l'entreprise", no. 16, October-December 1986, pp. 7 to 36.

3) The CGT refused to sign the intersectoral agreements of 1983 on "alternating training" because the union considered that the guarantees of training made to young people were inadequate and that the jobs on offer were too insecure.

authorities can provide the finance to ensure that as many of their members as possible acquire a real skill that will make them as employable as possible.

2. Problems in the guidance of the system

The French system of vocational training, as it emerges from the descriptions in the first two parts of this report, is extremely complex, with its various geographical levels of intervention - national, regional, departmental and local -, its various levels of association - intersectoral, sectoral and firm -, and the various parties intervening in the training process- the Ministry of Education, the AFPA, the ASFOs, the associations and private training organisations -, to say nothing of the intermediate organisations such as the FAFs... The system thus constituted is the subject of much criticism.

The first set of criticisms relates to the ability of the various elements of the system to define the general orientation of vocational training in the light of the medium-term prospects for change in the economic and social characteristics of the country. This is particularly true at national level of the Ministry of Education and the AFPA with their CPCs, and at regional level of the apprenticeship system. In this case, it is a question of defining not only the levels of courses and specialisms, but also diplomas, educational paths and curricula, taking full acount of the many debates on the more or less appropriate position of the various paths and, in particular, on the content of training courses. Thus, on the subject of apprenticeships, we can read that "some diplomas have become obsolete, the continuing training system trains too many young people in some trades and not enough in others and (or) does not always supply training leading to diplomas of a sufficiently high level or appropriate to the needs of firms".

A second series of criticisms relates to the implementation of training programmes within the structural framework described above. The first of these criticisms is that the process of implementing training programmes is far too slow: it is not enough to define a new CAP or to overhaul the apprenticeship system: the corresponding classes still need to be set up and provided with the necessary resources. Nor is it enough to state that needs in certain areas have fallen: the corresponding courses need to be closed down. In fact, it is the inflexibility and lack of adaptability in the system that are often criticised. No less fundamental are the criticisms of the content of training programmes, particularly of the way in which they link theoretical, predominantly technological knowledge with more practical skills oriented towards the actual carrying out of a job. This double imbalance is condemned on the one hand with respect to the initial training provided by the Ministry of Education, which is considered to be remote from firms, and on

the other with respect to the continuing training system, the theoretical content of which is judged to be of too low a standard. It is thus the quality of the training provided that is being generally criticised and that is being held largely responsible for the high unemployment rates among certain sections of the population.

The final set of criticisms relates to the status of vocational training in the work place, which is the subject of debate. It is recognised that the state, which ratifies diplomas either through the Ministry of Education or the "ratification committee" is the basic guarantor of diplomas (4). However, it is the recognition of diplomas in collective agreements and pay scales that is the area of greatest contention between unions and management. We have seen that in this repect the intention of the banks, for example, was to remain in complete control. Similarly, the metal industry has doubled the value attached to the CAP awarded on completion of the apprenticeship controlled by the industry by means of its own system of certification, which leads in turn to a higher job classification.

3. Improvement needed in the functioning of the joint bodies

A true assessment of the real role played by a joint body in the system cannot be based simply on knowledge of its composition and responsibilities. The influence of unions and management depends on the smooth functioning of the bodies on which they sit and thus on the role they are seeking to play or are allowed to play within the organisation. The principal criteria used for assessment in this area fall into five main categories:

- "Hijacking" of joint bodies, particularly by the representatives of the state: sub-committees or working parties are set up with a different composition from that of the plenary body so that they can be more easily controlled; the plenary body is asked to ratify decisions that have already been taken after debates that are at best academic. In this case, the joint body provides an "alibi" with respect to the public. This is a frequent criticism.

- More or less systematic alliances between two actors in order to restrict the role of a third. In many tripartite bodies, the employees' representatives accuse the representatives of the public authorities of colluding with the employers' representatives in such a way as to prevent them from expressing their point of view. The collusion may include the preparation of files, the manner in which meetings are conducted and ways of

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4) J. AFFICHARD, "Nomenclature de formation et pratiques de classement", in Formation-Emploi, no. 4, October-December 1983, pp. 47 to 62.

voting on resolutions.

- Inequalities in information, due, for example, to the varying capacities of the actors to carry out research, to collect and process data and to acquaint themselves with surveys and research work.

- Systematic obstruction, for example, by lectures of an ideological nature or speeches on general principles which do not touch upon the subject in question, which is the purpose of the meeting.

- Inadequate technical support for the majority of participants, who are not able to make worthwhile contributions to the discussions of files, particularly when it is a question of criticising the conception or interpretation and developing counter-proposals.

- More general malfunctioning, such as a lack of preparation of files, excessively tight deadlines, which make it impossible to study documents in sufficient depth, tasks which are defined too broadly, which leads to many separate questions being broached without any of them being dealt with properly.

- High levels of passivity or absenteeism. It is not sufficient for representatives to be officially present; they should also take an active part in meetings of the various bodies.

- Imbalance between the participants due to the fact that the employers' representatives often present a unified front, whereas the employees' representatives are often divided among themselves (the CGT often adopts its own stance) and also because representatives of chambers of commerce, trade and agriculture, who are also spokesmen for the management side, sit side by side with the employers' representatives.

The number and vigour of the criticisms varies according to the bodies in questions and the people interviewed. It can be said that, in general, the criticisms made by the employees' representatives are more vigorous than those made by the employers, and that the CGT is definitely the most critical of the trade union organisations. As for the bodies themselves, it is noticeable that the strongest criticisms are generally reserved for the decentralised bodies at regional, departmental or firm level. The central bodies, particularly those within the training system, are more highly regarded.

3.1 The functioning of the national CPCs

The functioning of the CPCs attached to the Ministry of Education has gradually improved, particularly with respect to

their ability to analyse the need for new training programmes arising out of economic, technological and organisational changes in firms. Among other things, the CPCs have improved their ability to conduct investigations and put forward proposals on behalf of the authorities in order to counter those put forward by other interested parties, particularly the employers' organisations which are often considered able to impose their own wishes because they are more highly organised and have better access to statistical and research data ([5]).

Despite these improvements, the CPCs and the CIC have still been the subject of serious criticism from both unions and management, on the grounds that their objectives were not sufficiently precise, that their horizons were too short-term and that they operated a majority voting system ill-suited to consultation, with the result that problems associated with the ratification of diplomas too often obscured the other aims of the committees. They have also criticised their slowness: the rate at which diplomas are scrutinised means that the average rate of renewal is only once every 20 years! They are still criticising them, paradoxically perhaps, for the fact that they have insufficient powers and that the two sides of industry are inadequately represented relative to the importance of their role, bearing in mind that the CPCs are too isolated, both from each other and from the other bodies and institutions that play a role in vocational training policies.

All these criticisms led first of all to the abolition of the voting procedure and then to the proposal of a new reform in which planning functions would be more clearly distinguished and given greater weight relative to the consultative functions, while the recognition of diplomas would be the subject of direct agreements between employers and unions.

Similar criticisms are levelled against the central CPCs attached to the AFPA. Starting from the principle that the objectives of the AFPA cannot be determined "effectively" without the active participation of both employers' organisations and unions, who are considered to have a better knowledge of actual training needs, the unions tend to the view that the functioning of most of these CPCs is defective, with the exception of those in the metal and construction industries, because their meetings are too irregular. They also think that the members of these committees are not always the most dynamic members of the industry in question, or the best informed about new

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[5]) This is due in particular to the existence of CEREQ, the Centre for Research into Qualifications, which has improved its ability to produce analyses and provide summaries of the results which are immediately utilisable within the framework of the CPCs.

technologies. Moreover, they know nothing of the the various studies carried out by agencies external to themselves. Finally, they feel that the practice of appointing specialist sub-committees should be reviewed, since it leads to an over-restricted approach.

3.2. The functioning of the centralised regulatory bodies

Some bodies have been provided for by legislation but have not been set up. Thus the Joint Employment Committees (CPEs) have not been established in all sectors.

Other bodies have been set up but do not fulfil their role as provided for in the legislation.

The National Council for Vocational Training, Social Advancement and Employment only meets infrequently to define priority objectives for training financed by the public authorities. In 1982, it was youth training which received top priority, while in 1984 it was training for the electronics, food and food processing and construction industries and foreign trade. The National Council has not met since 1984 and its standing committee, which meets regularly, has taken over its functions.

The committee for the coordination of regional apprenticeship and continuing vocational training programmes does not function as planned in the legislation.

A recent creation, this committee has not found a role for itself. It is said to duplicate the function of the committee of management [6].

Its composition is also somewhat problematic: although the regions are supposed to be able to express their point of view in this body, not all the regions are represented, since the committee comprises 12 representatives of the regions, despite the fact that there is a total of 23 regions. Moreover, the representatives of the regions are elected politicians who speak as representatives of political parties.

As far the Committee of Management is concerned, the conditions under which it operates mean that it has no decision-making powers as provided for in the legislation, but acts rather as a consultative body. There are two reasons for this: firstly, the administration speaks with a single voice and secondly, the

[6] Article by J.P. SOISSON in "Le Monde" which claims to express the opinion of certain sections of both unions and management. The author is a former minister for vocational training and chairman of this committee.

Finance Minister has a veto, since it is public funds that are being administered. Nevertheless, the committee of management seems to be one of the few bodies in which there is real dialogue on specific questions, particularly the commitment of public funds. There can be no expenditure on training unless it has been approved by the committee of management. The two sides of industry are thus heavily involved in the management of public funds allocated to training.

The Joint Committees on Employment, when they have actually been set up, are sometimes only bodies in which the employers provide information which is already in the public domain.

3.3. The functioning of the decentralised regulatory bodies

The criticisms levelled at the consultative bodies are even more applicable at regional and department level.

The function of the regional committees on vocational training, which is to "examine the questions raised by regional employment and to put forward proposals as to how best to use and develop the resources available for vocational training in the region", even though the law also states that these committees should express their views on the annual programmes of continuing and apprentice training, is considered to be much too broad. It leaves a great deal of room for free choice, which usually leads to inertia.

The employees' representatives criticise these committees for functioning too often as formal bodies which delegate their role to other bodies, such as the standing regional group, the department employment committees or ad hoc working groups under the chairmanship of regional directors of labour. These groups are all the more dominated by officials since the people sitting on them are for the most part nominated "ex officio". Thus the only task left to the committees is to give formal opinions on options which merely reflect the orientation of the regional administrations.

These opinions are rarely based on serious studies, particularly statistical ones, and thus have an inadequate technical foundation. One of the major problems encountered in this respect by the regional vocational training plans lies in the inadequacy, indeed the absence of any consideration at regional or sectoral level either of the changes in economic activity or of working populations, because of a lack of consultation of interested professionals.

Finally, the deadlines for consultation imposed on the professional organisations are so tight that they are not able to respond properly, even if they had the capacity to do so. The fact is that the administrative bodies do what they like at the

regional level and that the extension of consultation does not of itself guarantee the quality of the dialogue; indeed the contrary would seem to be the case.

Moreover, criticisms of a different kind are emerging which point to the link with the politics. On the one hand, the members of the committee tend to accuse each other of confusing the bodies, of turning the technical committees into "political arenas" and preventing them from operating properly. On the other hand, there is a certain degree of anxiety about the possible domination of the bodies by regional politicians using vocational training for electoral purposes or to satisfy the demands of pressure groups.

Finally, the bodies are too cumbersome (the department committee comprises 60 people) and too numerous to function properly. Thus the Construction Federation estimates that for the Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur region alone, 400 full-time workers would be needed if the employers were adequately to fulfil all their functions with respect to vocational training.

3.4. Consultation at firm level

The criticisms made by union organisations of the current functioning of the consultation procedures at firm level fall into several categories which do not all have the same significance:

- the first relates to knowledge of the legislation and statutes on which the functioning of works committees is based. The vocational training system is based on some of this large body of different and very complex laws and statutes, full knowledge of which cannot be acquired and kept up to date without significant investment of resources. As a result, training is often restricted to a few individuals who make special efforts and who tend to cut themselves off from others.

- a second criticism concerns the difficulty experienced by employee representatives on the works committee in obtaining an overall view of the various options available for vocational training policy. It is not a question here of being conversant with the opportunities offered by the various laws, but rather of being acquainted with the types of training programmes that could be implemented by virtue of their appropriateness to the firm in question. This is thus a problem of general information.

- this difficulty is compounded by the fact that, while the union organisations have regional or infra-regional structures for each sector, which normally arrange and coordinate exchanges of information, these structures are in fact inadequate and the elected representatives are left very much to their own devices.

- consequently, the elected representatives find it difficult to play the important role that they should in formulating an overall training plan for the company, a role which is intended to go beyond merely approving plans submitted to them to providing fresh impetus and new proposals. Fulfilment of this role presupposes facilities for analysis and for informing and consulting with employees which in the majority of cases simply do not exist.

Finally, we should not forget a major difficulty of which the elected employee representative complain, which is that, in their eyes, the information given by company directors is inadequate. The information imparted is considered to be too often incomplete and late relative to what is needed.

To complete the picture, the role that the works committee is supposed to play in the training system for young people, development contracts and mass redundancies should not be forgotten.

In fact, the legal framework leaves room for great differences in the functioning of works committees, depending on the policies adopted by management and the resources of the union branches. There seems to be a fairly high correlation between these differences and the size of the firm. The greatest difficulties seem to emerge in the smaller firms, particularly those with less than 50 employees which do not have a works committee and in which trade union representation is low.

3.5. The management of training funds and the authorisation of training programmes

The unions are critical of the ASFOs, which they accuse not only of limited joint management but also of a confusion of roles, since they are both collectors of funds and also providers of training. They argue that these roles should be separated from each other, with a return to the logic of the FAFs, and that employers wishing to implement their own training policy, as is the case in the metal industry, should be restricted to managing training centres, but in competition with other authorised providers of training.

The procedures for authorising training programmes seem, in general, to be too cumbersome and inefficient, since courses considered ill-suited to needs are accepted. However, there are still differences between the employers' organisations and managers, who would prefer to see free competition and free choice for firms, and the unions, which mainly represent manual workers, which would prefer to see stricter approval procedures.

4. A limited role for unions and management, but an encouraging dynamic

Among the criticisms detailed above, we did not mention those relating to the structure of the system as a whole. They are nevertheless fundamental differences, though different in nature.

4.1. A restricted place in the present structure and functioning

The criticisms made by unions and management of the structure and functioning of the system fall into several categories of differing significance.

4.1.1. An initial criticism relates to the role that the public authorities allow them to play in what we have called "the production of norms" for vocational training, the idea being that norms will stand more chance of being applied if they are agreed upon by both sides of industry. It is true that the law is fairly inflexible in this respect, since it lays down constraints that are not wanted by either unions or management and which they cannot alter - whether it is a question, for example, of the legal obligation placed upon firms to fund continuing training or the dissociation that was achieved between the agreements of 1982/83 and the law of 1984.

4.2. The second criticism concerns those bodies which are considered to be too numerous, particularly the regulatory bodies at regional, department and district level. As we have seen, there is a multitude of bodies with general responsibilities, such as COREF or CODEF, or with specific responsibilities with respect to a particular structure. such as youth training, apprenticeships, individual training leave, employment, etc..., and whose tasks end up by being more or less restricted according to the way in which their members interpret them. This proliferation and vagueness inevitably leads to duplications and omissions, the former when, for various reasons, notably the allocation of funds, it seems essential to be present, and the latter when an unrewarding or difficult task needs to be done. In fact, depending on the region and circumstances, it would seem that some of the bodies are more or less dormant, leaving greater scope for a smaller number to operate.

4.1.3. A third criticism arises out of general examination of the place of unions and management on the joint bodies in relation to their composition and role. The overall assessment is somewhat mixed. it can be said that the joint bodies exert significant influence on all matters relating to the foundations of the continuing training system, to the extent that, as we have seen, negotiation between unions and management usually precedes any decisions on legislation or statutory legislation. The same does not hold for matters relating to initial training, which

comes within the province of the Ministry of Education and in which the ministerial departments have traditionally played a decisive role, as we have seen recently. As far as policy implementation at the level of general guidance is concerned, a distinction must be made between the executive and consultative bodies. Unions and management are not represented at all on the former, except for the Council for the Administration of Vocational Training and Social Advancement (CGFPPS), on which they sit not in an official capacity but as appointed experts. In contrast, they are represented on the consultative bodies at all levels and whatever the mechanisms involved. Finally, unions and management are also represented in the implementation procedures, but here again as much on the consultative as on the executive bodies.

4.1.4. Finally, it should be pointed out that the mere presence of unions and management on a body does not of itself indicate full joint management. Strictly speaking, only the boards of managements of the FAFs, which account for only 7.8% of the funds committed by firms to further training, and the further training committees of the ASFOs, which account for only 6% of the same funds, have full joint management. There is thus only a limited degree of joint representation in the implementation of the vocational training system, even though it comes into operation at firm level when training plans are being drawn up [7].

In fact, throughout the whole structure, the problem which emerges again and again is the place of the two sides of industry in the management of vocational training, and more particularly the problem of joint management, between the public authorities and the two sides of industry at the general level and between management and unions at sector and, particularly, firm level. Although a demand for real joint management has been made by the CGT, neither the employers' representatives nor the other unions, particularly the CFDT, yet seem prepared to accept it.

4.2 Past trends have increased the participation of unions and management

Although it was our intention in describing the current position of unions and management in the vocational training system to show the limits of their participation, the importance

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[7] The Fongécifs, which administer individual training leave, should of course be included in the same category as the FAFs. Nor should it be forgotten that the board of management of the AFPA is also jointly managed. Finally, the department apprenticeship committees, which are tripartite, have in practice, as we have seen, a decision-making rather than a consultative role.

of developments in this area over the past 20 years should not be underestimated, as is clear from the first part of this report. Their role has in fact steadily increased in accordance with four linked mechanisms:

- the extension of contractual policy linked to an increase in its sphere of application. It is mainly a question here of sector or firm-level agreements which in various areas, such as new technologies, equality between the sexes and re-training, have given unions and management a say, either directly (in agreements associated with the implementation of training) or indirectly (as in the commitments to develop training, on which unions and management are simply consulted through works or company committees, although ministerial departments do not in practice give their agreement unless these bodies are in favour).

- a change in the composition of the bodies, some of which were not originally joint bodies but subsequently became so, as in the case of the further training committees of the ASFOs in 1982.

- an extension of consultative procedures within the framework of pre-existing procedures. This is obviously the case with the training programmes implemented by firms, within the framework of the law of 1971 and on their own initiative and at their own expense, which have gradually taken shape through the training plan which is subject to the scrutiny of employee representatives in accordance with increasingly strict procedures. This trend has been reinforced by the increasingly important role played by mutualised funds in the implementation of continuing training, whatever the target audience.

- finally, in parallel with the two previous changes, there has also been a shift in the centre of gravity of the guidance system for vocational training towards centres where, even if consultation is problematic, it is none the less likely to develop, provided that the will exists for it to do so.

Thus, in sum, it could be said that vocational training in France used to be dominated by a profound duality between "the state-run system of initial training" and the "private system of continuing training". Initially it was the state system that dominated and was responsible for both planning and implementation. It was set up on a nationally unified base and was guided by sectoral logics modelled very closely on the professional federations. The joint bodies were consulted on the general structure of training programmes but not on implementation.

The situation created by the law on vocational training financed by firms brought about the first changes to this basic order: although the new law was also based on a sectoral

structure, there was a dual shift in the role of unions and management relative to what had gone before: on the one hand, it introduced some degree of joint management of training, at both sectoral and inter-sectoral level, and, on the other, instituted a system of consultation or dialogue at the level of firms themselves.

For its part, the law on regionalisation introduced a new change which, taken in conjunction with the previous changes, shifted the emphasis of the system from unification at national level towards regional decision-making centres, within which a tripartite system of consultation once again operated with respect to the orientation of training.

It can thus be said that there is a trend in France towards a strengthening of the role of unions and management in the processes by which the general objectives of vocational training are defined, based on a system of consultation under the aegis of the public authorities. This trend seems to have the agreement of all the actors involved. On the other hand, joint management at sector level of continuing training financed by firms and the trend towards increasingly wide-ranging negotiation at firm level are encountering increasing difficulties arising out of differences that exist between the employers' organisations and the trade unions, and between the various unions.

There also seems to be a certain degree of consensus on the trend away from national and sectoral logics towards intersectoral and regionalised planning; this consensus seems to have been reached under the dual influence of the changes that have taken place in the various sectors and of the desire "to bring home the links between training and employment".

Finally, mention should be made, for the record, of the dissociation that exists in France between the recognition of diplomas and occupational classifications. However, this dissociation is tending to diminish, both as a result of major collective bargains, such as those in the chemical and metal industries, which have tended to incorporate qualifications possessed as a grading classification and because continuing training is tending increasingly to lead to recognised training qualifications, such as the CAP, which are prepared for in the form of credit units.

Trends in the development of the role of unions and management according to the level and spheres in question

Level of intervention	Public sector		Sector financed by firms	
Central	Consultative	increasing	Consultative	no change
Sectoral	Consultative	increasing	Joint management	disputed
Firm	-	opening	Consultative	Consultative
Regional	-	consultative	-	negotiations

CHAPTER II - PROSPECTS FOR CHANGE AND IMPORTANT ISSUES FOR THE FUTURE

Taken as a whole, the place of unions and management in vocational training is consistent with the general trends which characterise political and social evolvement. Thus the future of their role cannot but be affected by the great debates currently taking place in French society: what should be the respective roles of legislation and contractual policy in regulating the relationships between social groups if there is to be less "state intervention"? Which institutions should the public authorities retain to act as links between central government and the various regional authorities in the implementation of policies and, in the private sector, to provide the links between firms and their own sectors and between the various sectors? What roles should unions and management play in the decision-making processes: should they have a merely consultative role or should they have decision-making powers? What importance should be attached to joint management relative to tripartism? (8). From this point of view, four main points need to be examined: the value of joint management; the risks associated with the withdrawal of the state; the requirements for the proper implementation of decentralisation; the issues at stake in balancing the role of firms with that of the sectors.

1. Joint management is not in itself a panacea

Mention was made in the introduction to this report of the extent to which some of those interviewed, on both the management and union sides, had pinned their faith in joint management. The same idea recurs in a report on the control of continuous training programmes financed by firms within the framework of the

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8) On this subject, see the article by Ph. SEGUIN, Ministère des Affaires Sociales et de l'Emploi, "Pour une relance de la politique contractuelle", in le Monde, 23 January 1987.

law of 1971, according to which state control could be considerably relaxed if real dialogue were to take place between the interested parties, and even more so if joint management were the rule, this being the case in firms in which negotiations had led to the formulation of objectives when there had been genuine and wide-ranging consultation of the works committee on the orientation of vocational training and when training plans were scrutinised as a matter of course within the same framework, at both the preparation and final evaluation stages. This was also the case when vocational training policy, the choice of training programmes and the allocation of financial resources were decided within a system of joint management.

In fact, experience shows that a certain number of conditions, more or less structural in nature, have to be fulfilled if a system of joint management is to operate efficiently. It is essential at the outset that there be a genuine desire for dialogue, which presupposes only a limited level of antagonism. This is by no means always the case in France, particularly with respect to vocational training. There have frequently been conflicts between employers and unions in this area; the former tend to see training as an integral part of their management prerogatives and are often accused by the unions of "short-termism" and of "subordinating training to the interests of capital", whereas the latter, while they see themselves as "defenders of the interests of workers", have for a long time considered training financed by firms to be a legitimate obligation on the part of employers towards their work force in the same way as wages, despite the fact that workers have no say in the definition of training programmes. This conflict has emerged particularly with respect to personal training leave. Moreover, this capacity for dialogue must be translated into an ability to select the pertinent issues for negotiation , particularly at times when traditional negotiations have ground to a halt. Finally, it requires an ability to define and implement programmes that are relevant to the objectives as laid down. Again, this is by no means always evident.

In other words, joint management poses the double problem of the philosophy and technical roles of both unions and management. As we have seen, these are two points on which industrial relations in France often run into difficulties. In the case of vocational training, genuine dialogue is unlikely to become established until both sides of industry start to see training as a real medium-term investment whose purpose is to enable the populations in question to acquire high-level vocational skills and until the differing interests of firms and their work forces become of secondary importance to the interests that they have in common.

2. The risks of disengagement by the public authorities

In the three-cornered game being played between management, unions and public authorities, it is the public authorities who are guarantors of the general social and economic objectives. In this capacity, it is part of their role to keep a constant check on the quality of training programmes, on the possibility of programmes leading to recognised qualifications and on the opportunities for less well-qualified populations, whether employees or not, to gain access to training and to ensure that economic and industrial policies are taken into account in training policies and that training anticipates employment needs.

The primary role of the public authorities is thus above all to act as a referee, both laying down and enforcing the rules of the game. It is difficult to see how they could abandon its responsibilities in this area, even by intervening within the framework of an extended contractual policy. Such a role will continue to be essential for as long as the French system retains its lack of unification and the individual organisations within it remain jealous of their own prerogatives. A good example is the administration of personal training leave, which is completely jointly managed through the COPACIFs, as we have seen, and organised on a regional and intersectoral basis as well as on a sector and firm basis. These organisations are divided into two categories: on the one hand, those linked to firms affiliated to regional employers' associations that are signatories of the agreements of September 1982 and which come under the umbrella of the COPACIF and, on the other, about thirty organisations linked to employers' federations that are not affiliated to the CNPF or the CGPME. Consequently, the agreements of 1981 which extended joint management of personal training leave, under the constraint of the priorities laid down within the COPACIF, could not apply to funds that did not come under the umbrella of COPACIF. It thus required state intervention (in July 1984) to ensure that measures decided jointly were extended to all training leave programmes; this shows that the autonomy that can be granted to unions and management with respect to continuing training is limited by the reluctance of the professional sectors to be tied by agreements reached by the employers' federations and the unions, unless forced to do so by state intervention (9).

A second role for the public authorities is to retain a capacity to give real impetus to the dynamics of the training system, particularly in the light of the major trends in economic and industrial change. The problem here is that of the inability or lack of will on the part of unions and management to embark on difficult tasks, such as the development of new training programmes linked to the spread of new technologies. A good

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9) D. SCHALCHLI, op.cit. p.30.

example is provided by the sectoral agreements concluded by the Ministry for Vocational Training with both sides of the electronics industries and the IAA.

On the other hand, it is not difficult to imagine the state withdrawing from direct intervention in the provision of training, except to retain a guiding role with respect to priority objectives neglected by both sides of the private sector.

3. The requirements for the proper implementation of decentralisation

The continuing vocational training and apprenticeship systems were the first two areas in which the power of central government was transferred to the regions, even though central government continues to decide the scope of the powers that it should retain. Moreover, it is no secret that most of the finance for the regions comes in fact from the transfer of funds by central government; in 1986, the state provided 15 billion francs for regional training programmes, compared with only 4 billion provided by the regions themselves. Three main instruments are used to regulate this decentralisation: bodies to coordinate regional policies with the COREFs and national policies with the National Coordinating Committee, planning contracts between central government and the regions and agreements on apprenticeships between central government and the regions. The functioning of this regulatory system raises a series of more or less serious problems depending on the conditions under which the system was implemented from one region to another.

Among the policy coordinating bodies, it is difficult to see the National Coordinating Committee setting itself up as a real "vocational training parliament", which is what it should be if it really wanted to play its role as a national coordinator of regional orientations, particularly since such an orientation would be tantamount to divorcing vocational training policy from employment and industrial policies. Moreover, at regional level, the procedures by which the regions are consulted by central government on their programmes operate in ways which range from strict separation through technical meetings in preparation for COREF meetings to the establishment of joint regional schemes (10).

The planning contracts between central government and the regions give rise to arrangements in which state programmes, intended to complement those implemented by the regions, vary very widely, as is shown by the inter-regional differences that exist in the ratios between government funds paid under the

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10) O. SCHALCHLI, op.cit. p.48.

planning contracts and compulsory transfers: these ratios range from 21.3% for the Burgundy region to 1.6% for Lower Normandy. The agreements on apprenticeships between central government and the regions play a limited role. In 1986, a total of 120 million francs were made available by central government in order to encourage the regions to develop their apprenticeship systems.

Moreover, the inter-regional links remain in the hands of the state, which retains trusteeship of organisations like the AFPA, many of whose training centres play a national role. Inter-regional links with neighbouring areas remain to be determined.

The importance and necessity of an improvement in the system by which the decentralised vocational training system is coordinated is thus evident, particularly from the point of view of a desirable extension of decentralisation to vocational training falling within the scope of the Ministry of Education. The main regulatory tool in this area would then be the regional vocational training schemes which would become part of the planning contracts between central government and the regions, which would themselves alternate with the National Coordinating Committee in the general arrangements for planning that used to be carried out by the Commissariat Général du Plan.

4. The issues at stake in the roles devolving upon the sectors and firms

There is no doubt that this last point is currently the single greatest single source of tension in industrial relations in France. The original intention of the law of 1971 was to favour the firm rather than the sector as the main forum for dialogue and negotiation on vocational training policies. In 1982, just as the obligation to negotiate on training at firm level was being introduced, the CNPF declared itself implacably opposed to the notion, thus forcing the government to retreat, with the result that such negotiations became basically sector-level discussions. Furthermore, while the results of sector-level negotiations since the implementation of the law of 1984 have been valuable in quantitative terms (about 50 sectoral agreements having been concluded), the content of these agreements remains disappointing in quantitative terms, since most of them are either merely paraphrases of the law or grand declarations without any obvious significance (11). However, in 1985, the CNPF adopted exactly the opposite position on the scheduling of working hours (cf. the law of February 1985 on flexibility) and refused to agree to give priority to sector-level discussions and demanded that priority should instead be given to discussions at firm level

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11) See no. 79 of the journal "Actualité de la Formation Permanente", October-November 1985.

There is no doubt that firms play a central role in the functioning of the labour market through their selection and training policies, through the allocation of workers to jobs and through their dismissal policies. The overall management of firms brings about a "transformation" in the labour force which lies at the heart of the production of skills in the economically active population and which determines to a large extent the mechanisms of exclusion and success in the labour market. Nor is there any doubt that the firm must be considered as a unit of management and that it is a bad idea to have different mechanisms which "divide the firm into sections" in accordance with different logics: youth training policy, which is negotiated in conjunction with vocational training, investment policy, which is negotiated with the Ministry for Industry, and the policy on reductions in the workforce which is negotiated in theory with the Minister for Labour and Social Affairs, but in fact with a wide variety of parties whose interests and constraints are far from similar. There is thus no a priori reason to reject the firm as an important forum for negotiation, particularly in view of the fact that some of them show great dynamism and open-mindedness with respect to training (12). But that is not where the problem lies. The main problem in France is the great differences that exist between firms in attitudes towards training and in the ability of employee representatives to conduct meaningful negotiations with their employers.

This ability to negotiate varies of course with size of firm, since firms of different sizes are affected in different ways by the relevant legislation; the law of 1971 on continuous training does not apply, as we have alredy seen, to firms with fewer than 10 employees, while works committees are compulsory only in firms with more than 50 employees. The ability to negotiate also varies from sector to sector according to the level of unionisation. Thus in structural terms, it is the situation at firm level that is the most heterogenous, as the statistical evidence clearly shows (13)

It is reflected in differences in behaviour with respect to vocational training that can be typified as follows:

- firms in which there are negotiations that lead to draft agreements within the framework of company agreements, with training being one element of social policy and part of the

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12) A. d'IRIBARNE, J.J. SILVESTRE, "Formation des actifs et compétitivité des entreprises. Recherche d'une trajectoire de sortie de crise", LEST/CNRS paper no. 86-4, 32 p.

13) J.P.GEHIN, La formation continue dans les PME: spécificité et paradoxes", in Formation-Emploi, no. 16, October-December 1986; pp. 77 to 92.

system of job classifications and career paths;

- those firms which seek social dialogue and involve the representative bodies in the preparation of the training plan which is more dictated by circumstances, such as the installation of important new equipment or difficulties associated with problems in the market;

- those firms which show a high degree of managerial dynamism by developing training courses that may provide qualifications or lead to training diplomas awarded by the Ministry of Education and concluding agreements with the Ministry on the implementation of such courses, while at the same time merely informing employee representatives in accordance with the law without conducting any real negotiations;

- firms which show virtually no dynamism, either in terms of the volume of training or of ideas, and in which employee representatives attempt, with varying degrees of success, to push management into formulating a training policy;

- those firms with no training policy, not even the minimum provision laid down in law.

The problem that is undoubtedly raised in this case is that of the minimum provision laid down in law or in the sectoral agreements linked to the law in order to extend its sphere of application. The law of 1984 states that, in the absence of negotiations at sector level, negotiations shall be conducted on the objectives and instruments of vocational training by the competent bodies at firm level. It is difficult to see how, given the current state of awareness on the part of the managers of French companies about the importance of "investment in training" and given the current state of employee representation in those same firms, direct negotiation at firm level could possibly be envisaged without a significant change in the law not only to raise the level of legal obligation but more particularly to extend this obligation to all firms; the consequence of not doing this will be steep decline, both economic and social.

On the other hand, widespread awareness of the value of vocational training as investment. linked to the development of the instruments required to implement such training, will probably encourage the development at all levels, particularly at that of the firm, of a significant level of agreement between unions and management on long-term training plans which would put the emphasis on training programmes leading to qualifications in such a way as to ensure the firm's development and to protect employees against the uncertainties of economic change, and which would, moreover, strongly encourage personal training leave. The benefit of such a situation is that it would make it possible to avoid being confined to a single model and to find solutions suited to the type of activity, the skill level of the work force and the nature of the social debate specific to the firm or the sector in question.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Throughout this report on the role of unions and management in vocational training in France, we have attempted to show, through a general description of the system and appropriately chosen examples of the functioning of some of the bodies within the system, the logic which prevailed when the system was set up and, above all, its performance relative to what can be considered to be the main objectives of a training system: to produce skills that are accessible to all and in keeping with the general economic and social orientation of the country and to encourage active management of the world of work, particularly in order to reduce the risks of long-term unemployment for those categories of workers most at risk.

We hope to have shown that from these two points of view the achievements of the system remain limited. This is due in part to a defective structure, which makes adequate guidance of the system very difficult. The criticisms have centred on the overall complexity of the system with its numerous mechanisms and bodies, the responsibilities and operating conditions of which are far from fulfilling perceived needs.

In this context, the place of unions and management in the bodies that guide this system of vocational training at all levels and in relation to the various guidance or executive functions is limited, even though it is relatively greater than in other areas of social life. It is limited to the extent that management and unions clearly play a more important role on the advisory and consultative bodies than on the decision-making bodies. This is particularly true of the principle of joint management, which has only really been established in the case of some of the bodies that guide the continuing training programmes.

However, it is important not to underestimate the significance of the changes that have taken place in the course of the past twenty years in the legislative and statutory framework and in the area of industrial relations: the range of measures that started with the the agreements of 1969 and the law of 1971 established an obligation on the part of firms with more than 10 employees to finance continuing vocational training for their employees; the law of 1982 on decentralisation and the measures taken in recent years by the Ministry of Education to strengthen the ability of the CPCs to guide the vocational training programmes for which it is responsible are unambiguous indications of the trend towards a strengthening of the role of unions and management in vocational training.

However, it would appear that the entire vocational training system is at a new crossroads; faced with more general inquiries into the respective roles to be played by the state and private initiatives and with changes in firms themselves, the whole system can hardly avoid reflecting on the conditions under which it operates in many cases: some institutions lying dormant, while

others have become platforms rather than places in which any real work is done.

Above all, it cannot avoid reflecting on the structural conditions that must be fulfilled before real dialogue on vocational training can take place between the two sides of industry. One of these conditions is undoubtedly the need to have available the technical instruments provided by research and statistical studies that enable the actors to conduct their dialogue on properly defined subjects and issues. No less important is the need for the actors to have available at all levels the required skills in the number and quality desired. This is true for both the public authorities and the employers. It is even more true in the case of employee representatives who, given the current state of their resources in this area, cannot reasonably claim to be meeting the requirements of their task, even if more important roles were devolved to them. They are in fact experiencing difficulties at all levels and in all the consultative bodies in finding the skills they require in sufficient numbers and quality in order to act not only in a consultative capacity but also as initiators. Their activists are too few in number and their organisational structures too weak. This is especially true at the most decentralised levels of the department and the firm. At the same time, however, these levels are emerging as the ones best suited to the implementation of active and effective vocational training policies and are tending, as we have seen, to play an increasingly important role. This is due firstly to the fact that the Ministry of Education is trying to make overtures towards firms through courses or the idea of alternating training, secondly to the "youth training schemes", and thirdly and finally, quite apart from the training carried out within the framework of training plans, to everything related to redundancy and retraining.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 - SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENTS

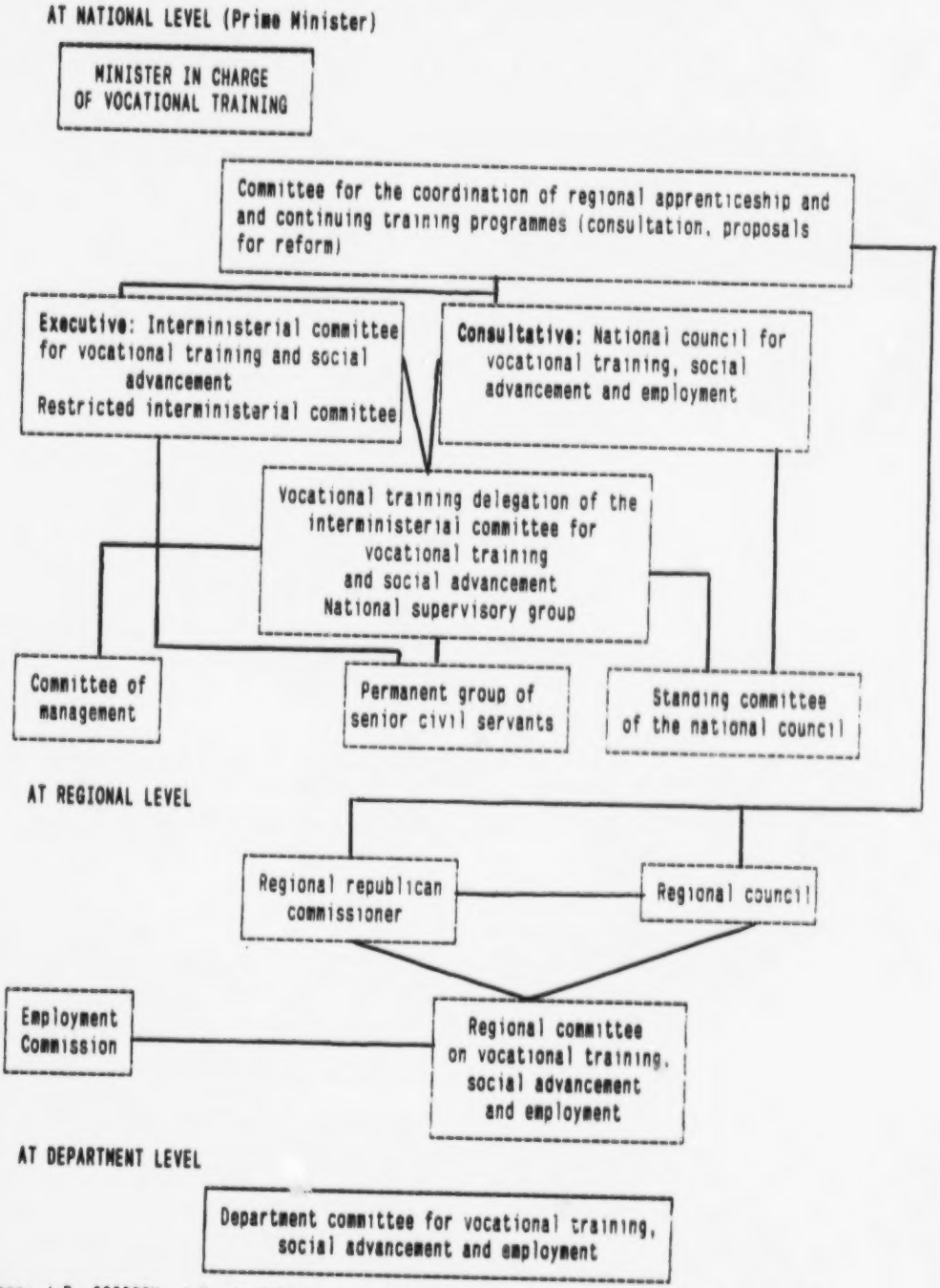
LEVELS	Law of 3/12/1966: Law on vocational training	Grenelle agreements	Law of 31/12/68 on payment of trainees in continuing training	National inter-sectoral agreement on job security of 10.2.69	National intersectoral agreement of 9.7.70 on vocational and further training	Law of 16.7.71 on vocational and further training
NATIONAL	Provided for the creation of a National Council for Vocational Training, Social Advancement and Employment (FPPSE)				Creation, in pursuance of agreement of 9 July 1970 through a draft agreement of 24 May 1971, of a Joint Committee for Training and Further Training at national, inter-sectoral level. Definition of role of CPEs with respect to training.	Creation of National Council for Vocational Training, Social Advancement and Employment (FPPSE)
SECTORAL		Point 6: "The CNPF and the trade unions will meet later in order to seek agreement on the establishment of joint employment committees (CPEs) and the tasks to be allocated to these committees that are to function in principle at national and, if necessary, at district level	Creation of FAFS for employees	Creation of Joint Employment Committee (CPE) at national level for each trade or group of trades. These CPEs have the power to set up regional committees		Regulation of the FAFs for employees. This law provided the basis for the development of the FAFs.
REGIONAL/ DEPART-MENT	Provided for the creation of regional committees of FPPSE			Gradual establishment of Joint Intersectoral Employment Committee at regional level		Creation of the regional committees of the FPPSE. Creation of FPPSE committees at dept. level
FIRM	Laid down the principle of consulting the works committee on general problems relating to vocational training					Laid down the principle of compulsory consideration by works committee of all training-related problems (refers to the law of 3/12/66 and the ensuing decrees.

APPENDIX I - SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENTS (contd.)

LEVELS	Amendment of 9/7/76 to the intersectoral agreement of 9/7/70 on vocational and further training	Law of 17/7/78 on individual training, training leave and the payment of trainees. Decree on works committees of 27/3/79	Law of 2/3/82 on rights and freedoms of communes, departments and regions. Law of 7/1/83 on the distribution of responsibilities between comm., depart. and regions.	Amendment of 21/9/82 to intersectoral agreement of 9 July 1970	Law of 24 /2/84	Enforcement of agreement on regional joint committees of 6/7/84
NATIONAL			Cent. gov. given certain functions with respect to voc. training and apprentice system (law of 1983). Creation of National Com. for Coordination of reg. voc. training and apprent. schemes (law of 1983). Committee set up by decree of 27/9/83	Creation of Committee for Coordination of questions relating to individual training leave (COPACIF)		
SECTORAL		The FAFs for employees are given legal status		Decisions on course approval made by CPEs no longer legally binding. Employees' FAFs may administer the 0.1% allocated to ind. tr. leave	Obligation to negotiate on resources and aims of vocational training at sector level	
REGIONAL and DEPART-MENTAL			Regions given general responsibility for vo. training and apprenticeships. Change in composition of reg. comms. of FPPSE by decree of 19/9/83	Creation of Fongécifs. Joint Committees on Further Training established in all ASFOS.		The intersect. CPEs provided for by the nat. agreement on job security of 10/2/69 had never in fact operated. Hence the idea of relaunching them in 1984.
FIRM	Works' committee must consider company training plans and be kept informed of the implementation of those plans. Lays down the conditions under which the works com. considers company training policy.	Established the notion of "training plan". Takes up most of the provisions of the amendment of 9/7/76 relating to consult. of works com. on training plan and implementation thereof. The decree of 27/3/79 laid down the information the employer must give works committee.		Reduced to 200 the no. of employees in excess of which it becomes compulsory to set up a works committee. Defines the role and tasks of training committee	Made it compulsory to negotiate on the resources and aims of training in firms with 50 or more employees with 1 or more union branches, in the absence of a sectoral agreement. Implements terms of amend. of 21/9	/82

APPENDIX II

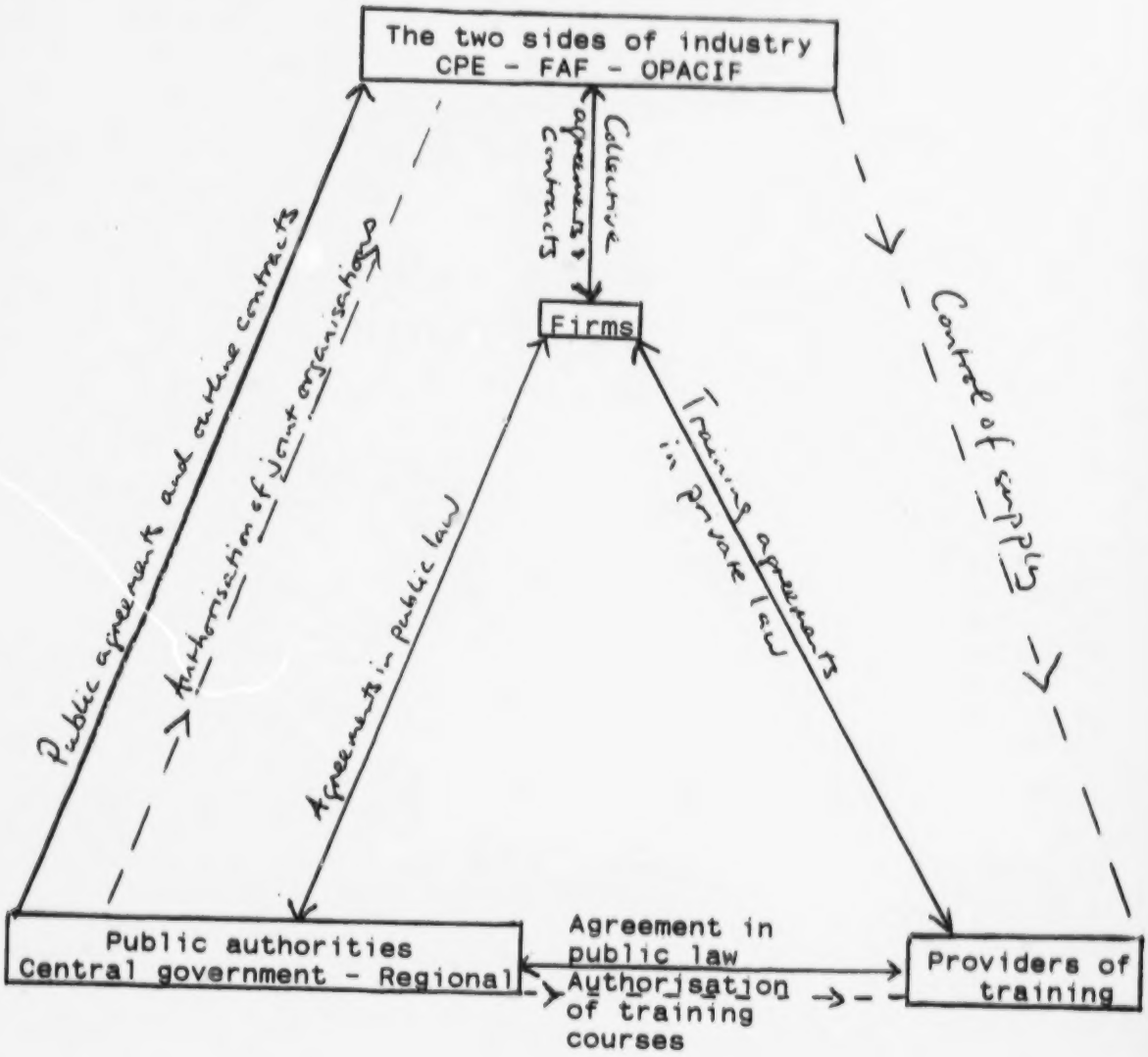
THE BODIES INVOLVED IN VOCATIONAL TRAINING


AT NATIONAL LEVEL (Prime Minister)
MINISTER IN CHARGE OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING
Committee for the coordination of regional apprenticeship and and continuing training programmes (consultation, proposals for reform)
Executive: Interministerial committee for vocational training and social advancement
Restricted interministerial committee
Consultative: National council for vocational training, social advancement and employment
Vocational training delegation of the interministerial committee for vocational training and social advancement
National supervisory group
Committee of management
Permanent group of senior civil servants
Standing committee of the national council
AT REGIONAL LEVEL
Regional republican commissioner
Regional council
Employment Commission
Regional committee on vocational training, social advancement and employment
AT DEPARTMENT LEVEL
Department committee for vocational training, social advancement and employment

Source: J.P. SOISSON, J.F. de MARTEL, B. REMOND: "L'enjeu de la formation professionnelle", op. cit., Fayard, 1986, p.51

APPENDIX III

THE ORGANISATIONAL SYSTEM
OF CONTINUING VOCATIONAL TRAINING:
ACTORS AND LEGAL RELATIONSHIPS



Negotiated contracts - Collective agreements and training agreements

Unilateral actions - Assent, control

Source: J.M. Luttringer, Le Droit de la Formation Continue, Dalloz, 1986, p. 167

APPENDIX IV

THE TRAINING INSURANCE FUNDS (FAFs)

Provided for by the law of 31 December 1968 but not set up until later, the training insurance funds have a unique legal structure. They are joint institutions established by agreement between employers or employers' associations on the one hand and, on the other, one or more trade union organisation. The FAFs are subject to ministerial approval; they must not have any legal ties with a bank or a training organisation.

The FAFs appear to fulfil the role of intermediary in two ways (1), both in terms of the relationship between employers and employees and by virtue of their functions with respect to training organisations and firms. The fact that they are jointly managed and that they collect funds from member firms, which leads to significant concentrations of financial resources, means that they have an important position in the system.

The strategies of the FAFs towards the organisations vary widely. Some funds restrict themselves to acting as a sort of bank: collection of money - allocation - administration of remaining funds. At this level, they may find themselves in direct competition with the ASFOs, which also fulfil this role through multi-lateral agreements which remain valid for several years. Others tend to direct the behaviour of member firms by laying down norms with respect to the type of training needed or the organisation that is to provide the training. Finally, a few insurance funds implement specific programmes as part of their own training and qualification strategy.

Since 1975, the FAFs have experienced considerable and systematic growth. In 1981, they were responsible for collected almost 9% of total expenditure on continuing training by firms subject to the law; this was a modest, but by no means negligible proportion, since the FAFs deal mainly with certain categories of firms classified by size, activity or region.

A distinction is usually made between two types of funds: on the one hand, there are the sector-level FAFs which classify firms by activity, with the main sectors involved being building and public works, agriculture and food processing, printing and publishing and health and social services; on the other hand, there are the inter-sectoral FAFs at either national (AFOS PME; AFOS PMI; UNIFORMATION) or local level. Among these latter, we have here isolated the FAFs set up and controlled by one or more chambers of commerce and industry.

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(1) Cf. MEHAUT (1982) op. cit.

Source: J.P. GEHIN, CEREQ, Collection d'Etudes no. 14, op. cit.

APPENDIX V

THE TRAINING ASSOCIATIONS (ASFOs)

The training associations, set up by the employers' associations, are without doubt the continuing training organisations which have experienced the greatest expansion in the course of the past decade. The ASFOs owe some of their rapid development to their unique legal structure which was brought by the 1971 legislation, though not explicitly provided for in the law or in the decrees by which it was implemented. The ASFOs may in fact equalise funds among member firms by means of agreements that are long-term (the companies will have several years, usually three, to implement training programmes financed by the funds provided) and multilateral (giving the opportunity to equalise funds among firms that are signatories to the agreement). As a result, a socialised system of managing the continuing training funds develops within employers' associations. A distinction is traditionally made between two types of ASFO:

. the predominantly single-sector ASFOs, that is those largely set up and controlled by sectoral trade unions, which account for almost two-thirds of ASFOs at national level. In our sample, we came across a few sectoral ASFOs with regional responsibilities: a brewing ASFO in the North and a metal industry ASFO in Aquitaine. However, most sectoral ASFOs are national organisations based in the Paris area and divided up on the basis of the activity of member firms; the distinction between activities is often a very fine one:

. the inter-sectoral ASFOs have developed less rapidly than the sectoral ASFOs. Some of them have a national responsibility: these ASFOs thus specialise on areas of common interest to several different sectors (e.g., industrial maintenance, servicing, . stock management, handling,...). However, most inter-sectoral ASFOs have limited regional responsibility. Thus in the various regions in our sample, there are one or more inter-sectoral ASFOs set up by departmental employers' federations.

In addition to this traditional distinction between sectoral and inter-sectoral ASFOs, we have isolated in our index those organisations controlled jointly by employers' associations and chambers of commerce and industry. In our sample, we came across organisations of this type in several regions: Haute-Normandie; Centre; Aquitaine; ... Without underestimating the role played by chambers of commerce and industry, we have put organisations of this type in the employers' section to the extent that they have the same structure as an ASFO and thus benefit from the possible equalisation of funds.

Source: J.P. GEHIN, Collection des Etudes no. 14, CEREQ, op.cit.

APPENDIX VI

A CLASSIFICATION OF CONTINUING TRAINING ORGANISATIONS

The notion of training organisation covers a diversity of situations. In order to be classified as a continuing training organisation, it is sufficient to fulfil a simple administrative requirement by filing a declaration of existence with the regional continuing vocational training authorities. These organisations may be individuals, firms whose principal or secondary activity is training, public or private teaching establishments or even associations.

In order to deal adequately with the number and, more particularly, the heterogeneity of the continuing training organisations, it is necessary to draw up an index by which the organisations can be placed into categories that are as homogenous as possible. From this point of view, the most commonly used index, particularly by officialdom, seems to us to be of little value: it is based on the single criterion of legal status and classifies the various training organisations as public, semi-public, private profit-making and non-profit making association in accordance with the law of 1901.

Studies of the continuing training system (1) show that legal status is an inadequate criterion by which to distinguish the organisations from each other and thus draw up an index. The 'association' category raises many difficulties: in terms of volume of activity and expenditure, it accounts for more than half of all organisations; however, the organisations included in it have few points in common. In fact, the term 'association' includes genuine training organisations constituted as associations, cultural, trade union and workers' educational associations and, in particular, many organisations set up as associations by the various social actors involved in continuing training: employers' federations (ASFO); chambers of commerce and industry; public authorities (AFPA)...

In addition to legal status, an index of continuing training organisations must take into account the role of the various social actors in the control of the between the organisations and socio-economic forces.

An initial division of the continuing training system into six distinct sectors thus begins to emerge, and this constitutes the basis for the classification used in this study: we have made a distinction between public sector organisations, associations, profit-making establishments and those controlled by employers' associations and chambers of commerce and industry respectively. The profit-making sector includes the training insurance funds.

By using a third criteria which makes it possible to take account of the characteristics of main activities of the organisation, we have refined this classification by defining homogenous categories within each of the six main sectors.

We thus have a two-level classification of continuing training organisations by means of which the organisations can be characterised both in terms of their social control and the nature of their activities.

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(1) Cf. in particular GEHIN and MEHAULT (1982) op.cit. GEHIN (1984) op.cit.

1. PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC SECTOR

11. Education
12. Universities, state-funded research
13. AFPA
14. Other public or semi-public organisations
15. CNAM
16. Indeterminate in 1 (Foreign public organisations)

2. CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

21. Organisations controlled by chambers of commerce and industry (CCI)
22. Organisations controlled by chambers of agriculture
23. Organisations controlled by trade associations
29. Indeterminate in 2 (Foreign chambers of commerce)

3. EMPLOYERS' SECTOR

31. Predominantly single-industry (Sectoral ASFOs)
32. Predominantly inter-sectoral
33. Organisations jointly controlled by chambers of commerce and professional associations
34. Other organisations controlled by an employers' federation or a confederation of firms
39. Indeterminate in 3

4. ASSOCIATIONS

41. Family, trade union or workers' education associations
42. Social service associations
43. Large joint or tripartite associations
49. Indeterminate in 4

5. PRIVATE PROFIT-MAKING SECTOR

51. Continuing training is main activity (inludes driving schools and language schools)
52. Initial training is main activity
53. Producers of manufactured goods
54. Management, marketing, selection and recruitment companies with secondary training activities
55. Individual operators
59. Indeterminated in 5

6. FAF (Training insurance funds)

61. Agefaforia
62. Other sectoral FAFs
63. Inter-sectoral FAFs set up by chambers of commerce etc.
64. National inter-sectoral FAFs
69. Indeterminate in 6

99. Indeterminate

Source: J.P. GEHIN, CEREQ, Collection des Etudes no. 14, op.cit.

APPENDIX VII

Distribution of expenditure by size of firm
All firms covered by the law
Evolution 1975-1981

(in millions of francs and %

Expenditure	10 to 19 employees		20 to 49 employees		50 to 499 employees		500 to 1,999 employees		+ 2,000 employees		Total	
	1975	1981	1975	1981	1975	1981	1975	1981	1975	1981	1975	1981
Expenditure (in millions of F)	146	408	410	1,058	1,228	2,687	884	2,173	3,069	6,889	5,757	13,215
Rate of contribution (%)	0.70	0.98	0.89	1.09	1.17	1.32	1.49	1.74	2.53	2.91	1.63	1.88
Internal training (1) %	2.0	1.1	3.0	1.2	8.0	4.4	16.0	12.3	33.0	27.6	21.0	17.6
Agreements %	47.0	30.1	45.0	30.4	37.0	29.5	28.0	26.0	11.0	11.1	23.0	19.4
Payment of trainees %	13.0	9.9	19.0	14.6	35.0	29.1	44.0	39.2	52.0	49.8	44.0	39.8
Transport and accommodation %	2.0	1.3	2.0	2.0	3.0	3.2	4.0	4.1	2.0	2.6	3.0	2.9
Payment to FAFs %	28.0	30.7	22.0	27.2	11.0	15.4	4.0	5.7	1.0	1.3	6.0	7.8
Payment of 0.2% from 1.1% %	-	17.9	-	16.3	-	13.7	-	10.5	-	6.5	-	9.8
Other expenditure (2) %	8.0	9.0	9.0	8.3	6.0	4.7	4.0	2.2	1.0	1.1	3.0	2.7
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

(1) Including expenditure on equipment (2) Mainly payments in full discharge Source: CEREQ, Processing of employers' statements 2483.

APPENDIX VIII

SUMMARY OF NEW ALTERNATING TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

	Qualification contract	Adaptation contract	Initial work-experience courses
Aims	To obtain a qualification	To adapt quickly to a job or a type of job with the aid of further training	. to find about life in the company . to draw up a career plan
Trainees	16/25 year olds * * without qualifications	16/25 year olds * * young people seeking employment and likely to find a job quickly	16/25 year olds * * young people in difficulties * long-term unemployed
Firms	All	All except: central government, local authorities, public administrative bodies, E.T.T., employers of caretakers, domestic staff and nannies	All except: central government, local authorities and public administrative bodies
Duration of training	Work contract * of fixed duration (6 months to 2 years)	Work contract * of fixed duration (at least 1 year); * or indefinite duration	Not a work contract but: * a tripartite contract between the employer, the young person and a supervisory organisation; * 3 months' duration (6 months if the course takes place in several firms)
Status of young person	Employee	Employee	Trainee
Payment	17 to 75% of national minimum wage; amount varies with age and seniority	80% of the agreed minimum wage for the job held (fixed-length contract) and for the training period (indefinite length contact) * minimum: national minimum wage	* Central Government: 16/18 year olds: 535 F per month 18/21 year olds: 1,185.30 F per month 21/25 year olds: 1,580.40 F per month * Employer: under 18 : 17% of national minimum wage over 18: 27% of nat. minimum wage
Administrative supervision	* Filing of induction plan or particular enablement by firm * Lodging of contract with DDTE	No particular enablement but lodging of induction plan (except for firms bound by contract or agreement with state	* Supervised by an authorised organisation (ANPE, PAIO, etc.) * Copy of contract to DDTE * Induction scheme (except for firms with fewer than 10 employees, or tied by contract or agreement with state)
Expenses chargeable against 0.1% and 0.2%	* 25 F/hour of training per young person * 40 F/hour in excess of 25% of working hours	46 F per hour of training per young person	375 F per young person and per month of presence in firm

* Can be waived for under 18's Source: Liaisons Sociales, 12 December 1984, no. 5574

LIST OF INITIALS USED

AFB	Association FranÇaise de Banque/French Banking Association
AFPA	Association Nationale pour la Formation des Adultes/National Association for Adult Vocational Training
AREF	Association Régionale de Formation Continue/Regional Association for Vocational Training
ASFO	Association de Formation/Training Association
BEP	Brevet d'Enseignement Professionnel/Certificate of Vocational Studies
BP	Brevet Professionnel/Vocational Certificate
BTP	Bâtiment Travaux Publics/Building and Public Works
CAP	Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle/Vocational Training Certificate
CCCA-BIP	Comité Central de Coordination de l'Apprentissage du Bâtiment et des Travaux Publics/Central Coordinating Committee for Apprenticeships in Building and Public Works
CDFPPSE	Comité Départemental de la Formation Professionnelle, de la Formation Sociale et de l'Emploi/Department Committee for Vocational Training, Social Advancement and Employment
CESB	Centre d'Etudes Superieures de Banque/Centre for Advanced Banking Studies
CFA	Centre de Formation d'Apprentis/Apprentice Training Centre
CFDT	Confédération FranÇaise des Travailleurs/French Workers' Confederation (Trade union organisation)
CFPB	Centre de Formation de la Profession Bancaire/Banking Training Centre
CFTC	Confédération FranÇaise des Travailleurs Chrétiens/French Confederation of Christian Workers
CGC	Confédération Générale des Cadres/General Confederation of Middle Managers

CGFPPSE	Conseil de Gestion du Fonds de la Formation Professionnelle, de la Promotion Sociale et de l'Emploi/Committee for the Management of Vocational Training Funds, Social Advancement and Employment
CGPME	Confédération Générale des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises/General Confederation of Small and Medium-sized Firms
CGT	Confédération Générale du Travail/General Confederation of Labour
CGT-FO	Confédération Générale du Travail-Force Ouvrière/General Confederation of Labour-Workers' Might
CIC	Comité Interprofessionnel Consultatif/ Interprofessional Consultative Committee
CNAM	Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers (College of higher technology for training students in the application of science to industry)
CNFPPSE	Conseil National de la Formation Professionnelle, de la Promotion Sociale et de l'Emploi/National Council for Vocational Training, Social Advancement and Employment
CNPE	Commission Nationale Paritaire de l'Emploi/National Joint Committee for Employment
CNPF	Conseil National du Patronat Français/National Council of French Employers
COPACIF	Comité Paritaire du Congé Individuel de Formation/Joint Committee for Individual Training Leave
COREF	Comité Régional de l'Emploi et de la Formation/Regional Committee for Employment and Training
CPC	Commission Professionnelle Consultative/ Professional Consultative Committee
CPE	Commission Paritaire de l'Emploi/Joint Employment Commission

CRFPPSE	Comité Régional de la Formation Professionnelle, de la Promotion Sociale et de l'Emploi/Regional Committee for Vocational Training, Social Advancement and Employment
CRPE	Commission Régionale Paritaire de l'Emploi/Joint Regional Employment Committee
EDDF	Engagement de Développement de la Formation Professionnelle/Committment to Develop Vocational Training
FAF	Fonds d'Assurance Formation (Training Insurance Fund)
FFPPSE	Fonds de la Formation Professionnelle, de la Promotion Sociale et de l'Emploi/Fund for Vocational Training, Social Advancement and Employment
FIMIM	Fédération des Industries Mécaniques et Transformation des Métaux/Federation of the Mechanical Engineering and Metal Transformation Industries
FNB	Fédération National du Bâtiment/National Building Federation
FNE	Fonds National de l'Emploi/National Employment Fund
FNTP	Fédération Nationale des Travaux Publics/National Federation of Public Works
FONGECIF	Fonds de Gestion du Congé Individuel de Formation/Fund for the Management of Individual Training Leave
GDA	Groupement Départemental d'Apprentissage/ Department Apprenticeship Group
GFC-BIP	Groupement Professionnel Paritaire pour la Formation Continue dans les Industries du Bâtiment et des Travaux Publics/Joint Group for Continuing Training in the Construction and Public Works Industries
ITB	Institut Technique de Banque
UIMM	Union Patronale des Industries Métallurgiques et Minières/Unions of Employers in the Metal and Mining Industries

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CEDEFOP — European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

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Alain d'Iribarne
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